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# *Enlightenment Contra Humanism*

*Michel Foucault's  
Critical History of Thought*

Bregham Dalgliesh

Doctor of Philosophy  
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# Abstract

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In this dissertation I claim that Michel Foucault is a pro-enlightenment philosopher. I argue that his critical history of thought cultivates a state of being autonomous in thought and action which is indicative of a kantian notion of maturity. In addition, I contend that, because he follows a nietzschean path to enlightenment, Foucault's elaboration of freedom proceeds from his critique of who we are, which includes a rejection of humanism's experiential limits. At the same time, and perhaps most importantly, I also suggest that Foucault articulates a post-humanist conception of finitude and being.

To begin with, I show that on humanism's path to enlightenment, which is established by Rousseau, Kant and Hegel and currently advocated by Rawls and Taylor, a philosophy of the autonomous subject who desires self-actualisation through recognition precedes the epistemological and political critiques which generate humanism's objective, normative and subjective axes of experience. On the basis of Foucault's archæological, genealogical and, when they operate together, critical historical critiques of these conditions of possibility for autonomy and recognition, I maintain that humanism fails to teach us how to think or act freely – that is, as critical thought that delivers enlightenment – and that humanism's knowledge of the world and its justice in politics necessitate the confined exclusion of those who are different and the submission of subjectivity of those who are normal.

In response to the immaturity that is at the heart of humanism, I illustrate that Foucault deploys archæology, genealogy and critical history to excavate his post-humanist, enlightenment alternatives of *savoir*, *pouvoir* and ethico-morality. After he relocates an explanation of cause and effect in the human sciences from *savoir* to the relations between *savoir* and *pouvoir*, I explicate how Foucault reconceives, firstly, the way *pouvoir* is exercised by productive mechanisms, which discipline the body and regulate the citizen, and, secondly, the nature of *pouvoir*, which he characterises as governmentality, or one's action upon the actions of others. He then rethinks freedom as the *vis-à-vis* of *pouvoir/savoir*, and I demonstrate how critical history reveals that, prior to the hermeneutic relation to self which is at the centre of humanism's conception of moral identity, ethical subjectivity in antiquity is formed through an ascetic, agonistic freedom that is based on a practical relation to self. Foucault uses this as a blueprint for the present, in which an ethico-political state of being autonomous in thought and action is constituted over against our limits of *pouvoir/savoir*.

I thus claim that Foucault's portrayal as an anti-enlightenment philosopher, who proffers nothing but anormative critique and amoral freedom, represents the perspective of those for whom to be anti-humanism is akin to being anti-enlightenment. These criticisms are exposed as misguided by the thesis that I verify in this dissertation, which is that critical history *qua* critique, thence an ontology, namely, Foucault's critical ontology, brings about maturity and endorses an enlightenment that is both contra- and post-humanism.

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# *Declaration*

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I declare that I have written this dissertation. It is based entirely on my own research and has not been submitted for examination elsewhere.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Bregham Dalglish".

Bregham Dalglish



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# *Acknowledgements*

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I would like to express my sincere gratitude for the supervision that I have received whilst researching and writing this dissertation. In particular, I would like to thank Kimberly Hutchings, who has not only been extremely patient and supportive in exorcising the dissertation from me, but invaluable in assisting me to define its philosophical substance. I would also like to thank Russell Keat for his excellent insights into how to structure the dissertation, and for his suggestions on its style of presentation, which has ensured that it is a lot more coherent than it otherwise would be. Finally, I would like to acknowledge the institutions that helped fund my studies, but which must remain anonymous, and to convey my appreciation to Porty, who guaranteed that keeping the body as fit as the mind was always a pleasure, if not the same endeavour.

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# *Dedication*

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*pour ma carino Laeig kaez*

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# Contents

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<b>Title Page</b>	i
<b>Abstract</b>	ii
<b>Declaration</b>	iii
<b>Acknowledgements</b>	iv
<b>Dedication</b>	v
<b>Contents</b>	vi-vii
<b>Preface</b>	viii-ix
<b>1. An Introduction to Foucault's Critical History of Thought</b>	<b>1</b>
i. Foucault as Friend or Foe .....	2
ii. <i>L'Histoire Critique de la Pensée</i> .....	11
iii. The Relations of the Parts to the Whole and its Limits .....	19
<b>2. Epistemological Critique in Kant and Hegel</b>	<b>24</b>
i. The Philosophy of Man in Hobbes and Locke .....	25
ii. Rousseau and the Recognition of Self-Love.....	28
iii. Kant and the Question of Maturity .....	31
iv. <i>Aufklärung</i> and the Metaphysics of Objective Experience .....	36
v. Autonomy and <i>Moralität</i> .....	42
vi. Hegel's Critique of <i>Aufklärung</i> .....	45
vii. <i>Geist</i> and the Phenomenology of Objective Experience.....	49
viii. Recognition and <i>Sittlichkeit</i> .....	54
ix. Synopsis .....	57
<b>3. Political Critique in Rawls and Taylor</b>	<b>58</b>
i. Political Philosophy and Normative Experience .....	59
ii. Rawls and Procedural Justice.....	61
iii. The Rational/Reasonable Subject.....	66
iv. The Self-Interpreting/Expressivist Subject.....	70
v. Taylor and the Politics of Recognition.....	74
vi. Humanist Critical Thought's Path to Enlightenment .....	76
vii. Synopsis .....	80

<b>4. An Archæology of Objectivity and <i>Savoir</i></b>	<b>82</b>
i. Kant, Hegel and French Philosophy .....	83
ii. Archæological Critique.....	90
iii. Foucault’s Erasure of Man from Objective Experience .....	97
iv. <i>A Philosophische Archäologie of Savoir</i> .....	101
v. May 1968 and Foucault’s Archæology and Genealogy.....	107
vi. Synopsis .....	113
 <b>5. A Genealogy of Normativity and <i>Pouvoir</i></b>	 <b>115</b>
i. A Proto-Genealogy of Reason’s Silent Other.....	116
ii. Genealogical Critique.....	121
iii. Foucault’s Critique of the Power of Normative Experience.....	126
iv. The Exercise of <i>Pouvoir</i> .....	130
v. <i>Somato-Pouvoir</i> .....	134
vi. <i>Bio-Pouvoir</i> .....	142
vii. Synopsis .....	149
 <b>6. A Critical History of Subjectivity and Ethico-Morality</b>	 <b>151</b>
i. The Nature of <i>Pouvoir</i> .....	153
ii. Foucault’s Critique of Humanism’s Immature Subjectivity.....	157
iii. A Critical History of Ethico-Morality .....	163
iv. The Confessions of the Flesh and a Hermeneutics of the Self .....	167
v. The Use of Pleasure and Ethico-Political Subjectivity.....	172
vi. The Care of the Self and Ethico-Social Subjectivity .....	178
vii. Synopsis .....	185
 <b>7. A Conclusion in Foucault’s Critical Ontology</b>	 <b>186</b>
i. The Intellectual Praxis of the Legislator and Interpreter .....	188
ii. The Legislator’s and Interpreter’s Criticisms of Foucault .....	195
iii. Foucault’s Anti-Humanism.....	199
iv. The Role of the Critical Ontologist.....	204
v. A Modern Attitude of Critique and Ascetic Æsthetic Maturity .....	208
 <b>Bibliography</b>	 <b>214</b>
Michel Foucault: Primary Texts .....	214
Michel Foucault: Articles, Interviews and Lectures.....	214
Other References and Sources .....	219

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# Preface

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Shortly before he died in 1984 at the age of fifty-seven, Paul-Michel Foucault wrote of the “irony in those efforts one makes to alter one’s way of looking at things ... [and] to change the boundaries of what one knows”.<sup>1</sup> After thirty-five years of philosophical labour, during which he always sought (to) *s’égarer un peu* (to stray a little afield from himself),<sup>2</sup> Foucault wondered if in the end it had enabled him to think differently. Perhaps, he reflected,

[my efforts] made it possible to go back through what I was already thinking, to think it differently, and to see what I had done from a new vantage point and in a clearer light. Sure of having traveled [sic] far, one finds that one is looking down on oneself from above. The journey rejuvenates things, and ages the relationship with oneself.<sup>3</sup>

In my case, I first began to orient myself in philosophy – at least if it is “still what it was in times past, i.e., an ‘ascesis’, *askésis*, an exercise of oneself in the activity of thought”<sup>4</sup> – through the liberal and communitarian debate, which dominated the under- and post-graduate curricula at Southampton and British Columbia. These studies culminated in a masters dissertation, in which I argued that feminism lies in a state of purgatory between the ambiguous status of the subject in post-modern philosophy and the foundational, masculine subject in modern philosophy. I concluded that, because of these problematic notions of the subject, feminism is unable to produce the critique necessary to transform patriarchy and realise freedom for its constituency of women.

With this in mind, I enrolled for a doctoral degree at Edinburgh to examine the potential for critique and freedom without the compass of the subject to guide them. Yet it soon became apparent that how one defines critique is a political matter in its own right, whilst how one conceptualises freedom is as important as the politics that implements it. As a consequence, I have researched these

<sup>1</sup> Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, p. 11. Michel Foucault was a professor at the *Collège de France* in Paris from 1970 until his death from an AIDS related illness. He held a chair there in what he designated as the *History of Systems of Thought*.

<sup>2</sup> Foucault, “Usage des plaisirs et techniques de soi”, p. 545.

<sup>3</sup> Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, p. 11.

<sup>4</sup> Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, p. 9.

philosophical themes through the writings of some archetypal modern, enlightenment philosophers, from Immanuel Kant and Georg Hegel to John Rawls, Charles Taylor and Jürgen Habermas, and one of their supposed post-modern, anti-enlightenment antagonists, Foucault. Ultimately, though, I have altered my way of looking at things through the latter's *dits et écrits*: literally, the things *said and written* by Foucault. Albeit some distance from where I started, what I present here in the shape of a doctoral dissertation is me looking down on myself en route to assuage my ignorance via the exercise of myself in the activity of thought.

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# *An Introduction to Foucault's Critical History of Thought*

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The core thesis in this dissertation is that Foucault's self-designated *histoire critique de la pensée*,<sup>1</sup> his critical history of thought, epitomises how to practice critical thought. On this understanding, I refute the standard reception of Foucault as an anti-enlightenment philosopher. Instead, I claim that he is pro-enlightenment and anti-humanism. In particular, I argue that while Foucault's critical history (of thought) is skeptical about humanism's ability to realise Kant's motto of enlightenment—"Sapere aude!, Be wise, dare to know!"<sup>2</sup>—his critical history is successful in its endeavour to manifest enlightenment. It does so through critique that cultivates maturity, which is a state of being autonomous in thought and action that results from both resolution and "courage to use *your* own understanding".<sup>3</sup>

Before I articulate how Foucault honours critical thought, which is the legacy of the intellectual revolution that blossomed in Europe in the eighteenth century, it is helpful for the terms of the investigation to touch on the principal objections that are made against him. As I spell out shortly, Foucault's critics suggest that he is more of a foe than a friend of enlightenment, and especially a foe of critical thought's twin pillars of how to think critically and act freely. This hostility is fuelled by humanism's belief that, as the sole path to enlightenment, anyone who is anti-humanism must also be anti-enlightenment. Subsequent to this, I define Foucault's critical history, which as I shall demonstrate in the conclusion to the dissertation represents a modern attitude—he portrays it as "a permanent critique of our historical era"<sup>4</sup>—which elucidates the experience that mediates who we are.

<sup>1</sup> Foucault, "Foucault", pp. 631-632.

<sup>2</sup> This is an amalgamation of Reiss' ("Dare to be wise!") and Beck's ("Dare to know!") translation of "Sapere aude!". Cf., respectively, Kant, "An Answer to the Question: 'What is Enlightenment?'", p. 192, f. 2.; Kant, "What is Enlightenment?", p. 286, f. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Kant, "An Answer to the Question: 'What is Enlightenment?'", p. 54.

<sup>4</sup> Foucault, "'What is Enlightenment?'", p. 42.

## *An Introduction to Foucault's Critical History of Thought*

Further, it is only after critique reveals these experiential limits, both humanism's, which perpetuate immaturity, and the foucauldian alternatives of *savoir*,<sup>5</sup> *pouvoir*,<sup>6</sup> and ethico-morality,<sup>7</sup> that Foucault elaborates ethical subjectivity. He conceives of it as an ascetic practice of agonistic freedom, or an aesthetics of existence, which is a resolute and courageous mode of being that promises a state of being autonomous in thought and action. As such, I claim that his critical history *qua* critique, thence ontology, namely, Foucault's critical ontology, endorses enlightenment and realises maturity in the present.

### 1.i. Foucault as Friend or Foe

It is fruitful to commence with Habermas' criteria of what is required if one wants to be recognised as a trustee of the critical thought that is at the heart of enlightenment. Firstly, one must subscribe to Kant's philosophical understanding of the present as the time of critique and the age of maturity; and, secondly, one should imitate Hegel's desire to find within the post-1789 epoch of modernity concrete evidence that lends existential re-assurance to the claims of critical thought.<sup>8</sup> Typically, re-assurance is rendered through epistemological and political critique, which *a propos* of a theorisation of the subject's true being give certainty to thought and action in terms of objective knowledge and normative justice. As Habermas apprehends the obligation of post-kantian, hegelian critical thought, modernity can "no longer borrow [from other epochs] the criteria by which it takes its orientation ... : *it has to create its normativity out of itself*".<sup>9</sup>

Obviously, the conceptual elements of critical thought's twin axes of objectivity and normativity, which Kant establishes and Hegel redefines, need not determine how one practices it. Rawls, for example, eventually jettisons his kantian

<sup>5</sup> I use *savoir* in contradistinction to *connaissance*, both of which translate as knowledge. Ian Hacking calls the former depth knowledge, and David Macey describes *connaissance* as scientific knowledge, whilst Foucault himself suggests that "[b]y *connaissance* I mean the relation of the subject to the object and the formal rules that govern it. *Savoir* refers to the conditions that are necessary in a particular period for this or that type of object to be given to *connaissance* and for this or that enunciation to be formulated". *Savoir* is then the background which frames the *connaissance* that is necessary for historical experience. Hacking, "The Archaeology of Foucault", p. 30; Macey, *The Lives of Michel Foucault*, p. 234; Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, p. 15, f. 2.

<sup>6</sup> I employ *pouvoir* to distinguish Foucault's idea of the relations of power, as he writes that "I hardly ever use the word 'power' and if I do ... it is ... a short cut to the expression I always use: the relationships of power". Foucault, "The ethic of the care for the self", p. 11.

<sup>7</sup> As I shall elaborate in chapter 6, I speak of ethico-morality to reflect the fact that Foucault's conception of ethics as a mode of subjectivation is an aspect of, and inseparable from, morality.

<sup>8</sup> Habermas, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, p. 16.

<sup>9</sup> Habermas, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, p. 7.



## *An Introduction to Foucault's Critical History of Thought*

heritage of a metaphysical conception of the subject for a democratically derived, social contract based notion of political liberalism, which is supported by the rational and reasonable citizen. For his part, the hegelian inspired Taylor counters atomistic and methodological individualism with a politics of recognition, which in its assumption of the self-interpreting, expressivist subject is as indebted to Jean-Jacques Rousseau as it is to Martin Heidegger and Johann Herder.

Nonetheless, the fundamental assumption from Kant through Hegel to Rawls and Taylor, who command attention in the dissertation because they establish and are current custodians of enlightenment critical thought, is that the philosopher renders an account of the truth of the subject's being through knowledge. It in turn morally justifies critique in as much as knowledge is presumed to be independent of power. Their philosophies of what Jean-Luc Nancy defines as the philosophical subject translate into the concepts of autonomy, recognition, political liberty and political liberation, respectively.<sup>10</sup> Kant and Rawls assume that liberty is by human right an *a priori* possession of the subject, and as such it is definitive of maturity, whereas Hegel and Taylor hypothesise that the subject has an existential desire to engage in a process of liberation, which concludes in maturity.<sup>11</sup> Indeed, once the manoeuvres of reason culminate in disenchantment at the close of the eighteenth century, the subject is introduced to resolve nihilism via his autonomy and recognition, which emphasise "the *intention* ... [and] the *purpose* for the sake of which one has acted or lived".<sup>12</sup> For Kant and Hegel, epistemological critique orders the world of things into objective experience, which is shouldered by the subject's moral identities of autonomy and recognition, and for Rawls and Taylor political critique regulates the power of the juridical state on the basis of the normative experience that is required for the moral identities of political liberty and political liberation. In short, what underpins Kant's and Hegel's approach to knowledge, and Rawls' and Taylor's account of power, is a theory of the subject. Whence the *raison d'être* of the philosopher, too, who at Zygmunt Bauman's analytical level of intellectual praxis is either a legislator that upholds autonomy, or an interpreter

<sup>10</sup> According to Nancy, the philosophical subject's identity is defined by self-consciousness, which relates to difference in three ways: it *opposes* difference, because difference signals the exteriority of being-outside-the-self; it *assumes*, and resorbs within itself *qua* self-consciousness, the difference that constitutes the subject; and it *makes difference*, insofar as self-consciousness relates itself to itself as different from all other identity and non-identity. "Being the very movement proper to self-consciousness", Nancy says, "identity – or the Self that identifies itself – therefore makes difference itself, difference *proper*: and this property designates or denotes itself as 'man'". Nancy, *The Birth to Presence*, pp. 9-10.

<sup>11</sup> Rajchman, *Michel Foucault*, p. 7.

<sup>12</sup> Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, § 666, p. 351.

## *An Introduction to Foucault's Critical History of Thought*

who meets the desire for recognition.<sup>13</sup>

The philosophical subject who grounds epistemological and political critique, which aims to re-assure modernity of itself as the age of maturity, encapsulates humanism and its path to enlightenment. From it, reason gives those in modernity a heightened consciousness of the autonomous subject's authentic being, as well as of the concrete recognition it requires to be self-actualised.<sup>14</sup> Essentially, as Rousseau first recognises and even Rawls grants, political liberty and political liberation belong together.<sup>15</sup> In fact, rather than an account of what freedom is in itself, it might be said that autonomy and recognition are conceptual statements about security from others, hence political liberty, or community with others, which is realised through political liberation. Notwithstanding, and with a generalisation that is a necessary analytical aid, it is possible to describe the critical thought of Kant, Hegel, Rawls and Taylor as humanist because it articulates truth based critique to re-assure modernity of its right to autonomy and desire for recognition. As Jean-Paul Sartre writes, at the centre of humanism is the autonomous legislator, man, for whom "it is not by turning back upon himself, but always by seeking, beyond himself, an aim which is one of liberation or of some particular realisation, that man can realise himself as truly human".<sup>16</sup>

From the perspective of this path to enlightenment, the friends of the faith in humanism find their foe in Foucault. They argue that he promotes anormative critique and proffers nothing but amoral freedom. In respect of the former, he locates truth within relations of *pouvoir/savoir*. This stems from his influence by Friedrich Nietzsche, for whom truth is always already a will to power.<sup>17</sup> Consequently, for critics like Habermas Foucault disguises his enlightenment values in pseudo-judgements,<sup>18</sup> and for Peter Dews his pre-critical investigations simply valorise marginal experience.<sup>19</sup> Taylor, for example, believes that "half-baked, neo-Nietzschean theories ... [d]eriving frequently from Foucault ... claim that all judgements of worth are based on standards that are ultimately imposed by

<sup>13</sup> Bauman, *Legislators and Interpreters*, pp. 3-5.

<sup>14</sup> Owen, *Maturity and Modernity*, pp. 2-3.

<sup>15</sup> Autonomy ensures "that all men are equally protected against the abuse of power and [the recognition that they are] equally entitled to insist that power shall be used ... for the general advantage". Tawney, *Equality*, p. 158.

<sup>16</sup> Sartre, *Existentialism and Humanism*, pp. 55-56.

<sup>17</sup> Merquior, *Foucault*, p. 108.

<sup>18</sup> Habermas, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, p. 282.

<sup>19</sup> Dews, *Logics of Disintegration*, p. 169.

## *An Introduction to Foucault's Critical History of Thought*

... structures of power".<sup>20</sup> Or, where I see an ethical subject who practices an agonistic freedom over against *pouvoir/savoir*, Lois McNay perceives Foucault's replication of "the fundamental dynamic of the philosophy of the subject[,] which posits an active self acting on an objectified world and interacting with other subjects who are defined as ... narcissistic extensions of the primary subject".<sup>21</sup> To all intents and purposes, Foucault reneges on enlightenment critique and freedom, which for J-G. Merquior confirms the bankruptcy of *gauchiste* foucauldianism, especially the lamentable efforts of its *parvenu* protagonist from Poitiers to practice critical thought.<sup>22</sup> "Professors at the Collège de France or other academic Olympuses", Merquior writes, who regard "themselves as maverick bohemians at war with bureaucracy and *les flics*[,] are a permanent possibility among French intellectualdom, a bourgeois stratum dying to pass for an intelligentsia".<sup>23</sup>

Most tellingly, Habermas puzzles over the compatibility between Foucault's enlightenment tendencies, which come to the fore just before his death, and his earlier anti-humanism.<sup>24</sup> Eventually, though, Habermas manages to piece together his foucauldian puzzle from several of Foucault's lectures and articles, most notably the essay, "'What is Enlightenment?'" which Habermas views as an attempted *rapprochement* with humanist critical thought.<sup>25</sup> Foucault, the foe of enlightenment with his anti-humanism, becomes Foucault the friend once he discards his anti-enlightenment nietzscheanism and embraces Habermas' post-kantian, enlightenment critical theory.<sup>26</sup> After the hostility to the objectivity and normativity of humanism in the 1960s and 1970s, which for Foucault's detractors above translate as anormative critique and amoral freedom, Habermas sees in Foucault's 1980s references to Kant a move away from archæology and genealogy and his return to humanism.<sup>27</sup> For travellers along its path to enlightenment, this *volte-face* is necessitated by the backward-looking critique of Foucault's critical history,<sup>28</sup> which in combination with critical ontology's ascetic æsthetics of

<sup>20</sup> Taylor, "The Politics of Recognition", p. 70.

<sup>21</sup> McNay, *Foucault*, p. 153.

<sup>22</sup> Merquior, *Foucault*, p. 107.

<sup>23</sup> Merquior, *Foucault*, p. 83.

<sup>24</sup> Habermas, "Taking Aim at the Heart of the Present", p. 106.

<sup>25</sup> Foucault explores Kant's original essay, "*Beantwortung der Frage: Was ist Aufklärung?*", in lectures to the *Société Française de Philosophie* in 1978 and at the *Collège de France* on the 5 January 1983. See Foucault, "Qu'est-ce que les Lumières?"; Foucault, "'What is Enlightenment?'" ; Foucault, "Introduction par Michel Foucault".

<sup>26</sup> Habermas, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, pp. 4-5.

<sup>27</sup> Habermas, "Taking Aim at the Heart of the Present", p. 108.

<sup>28</sup> Dews, *Logics of Disintegration*, p. 199.

## *An Introduction to Foucault's Critical History of Thought*

existence that divulges his “longing for an undefiled, immaculate and stable present”,<sup>29</sup> means that Foucault’s critical thought is a waste-land intellectually.<sup>30</sup>

Now, as I would like to argue that Foucault’s critical history and ontology affirm the enlightenment’s philosophical legacy of critical thought, his reception as a philosopher who is antithetical to critique and indifferent to freedom must be addressed. I therefore intend to demonstrate that Foucault’s critics misrepresent his critical history due to their confusion about his target of critique, which is not the enlightenment doctrine of critical thought itself but its monopolisation by the French tradition of humanism that is indebted to Kant’s transcendental subject and Hegel’s transcendental dialectic. Furthermore, if the best form of defence is attack, I want to suggest that Foucault’s critics’ conceptions of objective and normative experience, which they deploy to make epistemologico-political critique, procures maturity for some to the detriment of others. Humanism is unsuccessful on its own terms of the procurement, via reason, of the universal socio-political conditions which are necessary for autonomy and recognition. Contrary to the belief of the kantian and rawlsian legislator, or the hegelian and taylorian interpreter, enlightenment “is neither a world era to which one belongs, ... nor the dawning of an accomplishment, ... [but] an *Ausgang*, an ‘exit’, a ‘way out’”.<sup>31</sup> Thus, rather than a philosophy of the subject that precedes and guides critique, what is first required is a critical history of humanism that bars the way—and of the *savoir, pouvoir* and ethico-morality which paves the path—to enlightenment, which then give shape to an ontology. As John Rajchman suggests, Foucault does not start with an ideal of freedom “as a standard of critique, but with an analysis of the historical forms of the constitution of the subject”.<sup>32</sup> For these reasons, I argue in this dissertation that critique *sans* the subject, which gives birth to a mature mode of being, permeates Foucault’s critical thought throughout his career.

So how can this friend of enlightenment, whose anti-humanism is central to the realisation of maturity, be portrayed as a foe of enlightenment? Like most important thinkers since Kant, Foucault’s critical thought is a child of the Königberger’s call to take up pens around the history of reason. In France, this is realised from nineteenth century positivism to Maurice Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenology and Sartre’s existentialism as a history of science, which from the 1930s is countered by an epistemological history that is advocated by figures such

<sup>29</sup> Habermas, “Modernity: An incomplete project”, p. 14.

<sup>30</sup> Taylor, “Introduction”, pp. 10-11.

<sup>31</sup> Foucault, “What is Enlightenment?”, p. 34.

<sup>32</sup> Rajchman, *Michel Foucault*, p. 85.

## *An Introduction to Foucault's Critical History of Thought*

as Gaston Bachelard and Georges Canguilhem. By way of contrast, the history of reason in Germany is written from Karl Marx and Max Weber to Habermas as a history of social rationality.<sup>33</sup> Along this (Franco-German) humanist path to enlightenment, Kant's plea for a history of reason is met by a history of science that thrives on the progress of transcendental reason, and a critical theory that reconciles reason to its moments of social diremption.

However, because Foucault's archæology aligns him with the French epistemological historians, he opposes humanism's history of reason and seeks to rescue Kant from it.<sup>34</sup> Also, once Foucault locates his archæology of *savoir* within a genealogy of *pouvoir* he joins a nietzschean path to enlightenment, where he investigates the "philosophical intensity and ... the current philosophical effects ... [of Nietzsche's] texts".<sup>35</sup> On this basis, Foucault's critique confronts the ambivalence within modernity of humanism's history of the scientificity of social rationality. As Paul Veyne writes, Foucault's philosophical aim is "to show that every gesture, without exception, ... always fails to fulfil the universalism of a reason and always leaves emptiness outside, even if the gesture is one of inclusion and integration".<sup>36</sup> The task of critique is to make the will to truth – re-articulated by Foucault as a will to know – that is at the heart of humanism conscious of itself as a problem. In so doing, critique that is the prior condition of possibility for maturity facilitates an ongoing process of self-overcoming, which leads to an ethical subjectivity that is not so much a- as extra-moral.<sup>37</sup>

On the humanist and nietzschean paths to enlightenment, critique entails "the pursuit of *maturity* through reflection on *modernity*, where this reflection is articulated via a historical reconstruction of our being in the present".<sup>38</sup> However, for humanists critique takes its cue from an *a priori* philosophy of the subject's being *qua* autonomy and recognition, while nietzscheans make sense of how man is constantly becoming in his ethical subjectivity *a posteriori* to a critique of the

<sup>33</sup> Foucault, "La vie: l'expérience et la science", pp. 764-769; Foucault, "Critical Theory/Intellectual History", p. 27.

<sup>34</sup> For Foucault, Kant specifies the philosophical understanding of enlightenment that gives rise to the demand for critical thought, and he – rather than Hegel – advocates critique to find existential reassurance in the present, too. Foucault, "The Art of Telling the Truth", pp. 88-89 and p. 95.

<sup>35</sup> Foucault, "Critical Theory/Intellectual History", p. 33.

<sup>36</sup> Veyne, "The Final Foucault and His Ethics", p. 5.

<sup>37</sup> Owen, *Maturity and Modernity*, p. 3.

<sup>38</sup> Owen, *Maturity and Modernity*, p. 1. For David Owen, this is a post-kantian definition of critique, which as Habermas claims above springs from Hegel's differentiation of the age of *Aufklärung* into the manifestation of *Geist* in modernity. Although Owen speaks of Habermas' hegelian, rather than what I call the humanist, trajectory of post-kantian critique, Owen similarly opposes it but in terms of a path to maturity that is forged by Nietzsche, Max Weber and Foucault.

## *An Introduction to Foucault's Critical History of Thought*

finitude that moderates who we are. This divergence over how to do critical thought is best illustrated by the stark contrast between Rousseau, who as a founder of humanism claims that “[m]an is born free; and everywhere he is in chains”,<sup>39</sup> and Foucault, for whom “man does not begin with liberty, but with limits and insuperable horizons”.<sup>40</sup> Whereas on the humanist path to enlightenment the epistemologico-political critique of the legislator and interpreter unchains man to produce freedom, on the nietzschean path freedom is the effect of a critical historical critique of the finitude that defines man’s limits.

There is no question of Foucault’s return to critical thought in the 1980s. Instead, thanks to a skepticism vis-à-vis the sovereign subject of transcendental and dialectical reason,<sup>41</sup> he has always practiced it, albeit in a way – subjectless critique followed by an ontology – which seems to elude the comprehension of his critics.<sup>42</sup> Foucault’s philosophical difference, which from the very beginning has incorporated analyses of Kant’s<sup>43</sup> and Hegel’s<sup>44</sup> approach to the post-cartesian paradox of man as knower and known,<sup>45</sup> as well as an appreciation of philosophy’s task to re-assure via a diagnosis of the events which determine the present,<sup>46</sup> is misrecognised as anti-enlightenment. After his academic visits to America in the 1970s, when Foucault first realises the widespread incomprehension of his nietzschean path, he attempts to dissipate misunderstandings through dialogue with his Anglo-American and German peers.<sup>47</sup> Unfortunately, though, this is taken as a renunciation of his supposed 1960s and 1970s relativism and subjectivism. Together with his ethico-moral writings on freedom in the 1980s, these apparent signs of repentance fuel the notion that, after the misadventures of critical history along a nietzschean path to enlightenment, Foucault eventually returns to humanism’s path with his critical ontology.

There are also political explanations of Foucault’s misrepresentation as a foe

<sup>39</sup> Rousseau, “The Social Contract”, p. 181.

<sup>40</sup> “[L]’homme ne commence pas avec la liberté, mais avec la limite et la ligne de l’infranchissable”. Foucault, “La folie, l’absence d’œuvre”, p. 415.

<sup>41</sup> Marti, “Michel Foucault – ein moderner Aufklärer?”, p. 1352.

<sup>42</sup> On how philosophical traditions – for example, Britain’s absence of a tradition of the role of the philosopher, its sense of modernity as a problematic fact rather than project, or its disconnection of philosophy from history – foster cross-purposes between Foucault and his critics, see Gordon, “Foucault in Britain”.

<sup>43</sup> Foucault, “Espace, savoir et pouvoir”, pp. 278-279.

<sup>44</sup> Foucault, “Folie, littérature, société”, pp. 124-125.

<sup>45</sup> Foucault, “La vie: l’expérience et la science”, p. 775.

<sup>46</sup> Foucault, “Qui êtes-vous?”, p. 620; Foucault, “La scène de la philosophie”, p. 594.

<sup>47</sup> Gordon, “Question, ethos, event”, pp. 19-20.

### *An Introduction to Foucault's Critical History of Thought*

of enlightenment. He argues that, like Habermas,<sup>48</sup> his critical thought is influenced by the classic censure of the history of reason by Adorno and Horkheimer,<sup>49</sup> who chart how an excessively rationalised society blights critique and masks maturity.<sup>50</sup> Their prognosis is that critique must address the destructive aspects of enlightenment. These are personified by the experience of national socialism in Germany,<sup>51</sup> which prompted the Frankfurt School's exile to London and New York in the 1940s after the hostility of their political and philosophical reception in Paris.<sup>52</sup> Perhaps this is why, in a post-fascist society ill at ease with itself, Habermas attempts to confound the destructive aspects of enlightenment through Marx, who he rehabilitates during the 1950s, and an Anglo-American philosophy of language that sets "standards of rigour which continental philosophy could no longer satisfy".<sup>53</sup> Further, it is well nigh impossible to be an anti-humanist in post-war Germany because of who the expert critic of humanism is, the politically unambiguous Heidegger.<sup>54</sup>

In France, however, the destructive aspects of enlightenment refer to stalinism, which is filtered through the *Parti Communiste Française* (PCF), and the relatively serene experience of socialism's shortcomings closer to home. Foucault's critical history is a political response to marxism and a critique of French humanism's philosophically destructive aspects of enlightenment, or Sartre's existentialism and Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology. And, for better or for worse, Foucault's archæology of humanism's epistemology is indebted to a suitably de-Nazified Heidegger, who "stepped on stage after the War, like a phoenix from the ashes".<sup>55</sup> Unlike Habermas, though, Foucault does not throw out the baby with the bath water, as he points out the tenuous analytical relation between a philosophical conception and the concrete politics of someone who appeals to it, while even the

<sup>48</sup> Foucault, "Entretien avec Michel Foucault (1978)", pp. 72-73. The differences in perspective, theoretical tradition and conceptual language, which make a comparison between Habermas and Foucault problematic, are discussed by Isenberg, "Die kritischen Bemerkungen von Jürgen Habermas zu Michel Foucault", pp. 1397-1398.

<sup>49</sup> This is not to reduce Habermas to Adorno and Horkheimer, against whose mimetic unreason Habermas reconstructs the concept of communicative reason. Habermas, "Political Experience and the Renewal of Marxist Theory", p. 93.

<sup>50</sup> Adorno and Horkheimer, *The Dialectic of Enlightenment*, pp. 83-86.

<sup>51</sup> Adorno and Horkheimer, *The Dialectic of Enlightenment*, p. xiii.

<sup>52</sup> Foucault, "Structuralisme et poststructuralisme", p. 439.

<sup>53</sup> Habermas, "Ideologies and Society in the Post-War World", p. 45.

<sup>54</sup> Habermas, "A Philosophico-Political Profile", p. 155.

<sup>55</sup> Habermas, "A Philosophico-Political Profile", p. 156.

### *An Introduction to Foucault's Critical History of Thought*

best theories cannot guard against disastrous political choices.<sup>56</sup> In any case, Foucault's anti-humanism is on behalf of enlightenment rather than *Der Führer*. He—Foucault—is especially critical of French marxian, existential and phenomenological humanism's dialectical reason, which *a propos* of man knows no limits to its remit,<sup>57</sup> as well as of humanism's progressive narrative of history that is based on the *continuité de la conscience*.<sup>58</sup> As Sartre idealises this philosophy of the subject which grounds humanism's anthropocentric dialectical history,

[s]ince man is ... self-surpassing, and can grasp objects only in relation to his self-surpassing, he is himself the heart and centre of his transcendence. There is no other universe except ... the universe of human subjectivity. This relation of transcendence as constitutive of man ... with subjectivity ... we call existential humanism.<sup>59</sup>

However, from Foucault's point of view of critical history, which problematises man as the objective and normative condition of possibility for epistemological and political critique,

[h]umanism invented a whole series of subjected sovereignties: ... consciousness (sovereign in a context of judgement, but subjected to the necessities of truth), ... [and] basic freedom (sovereign within, but accepting the demands of an outside world and 'aligned with destiny'). ... The theory of the subject (in the double sense of the word) is at the heart of humanism[,]and ... the armature of our civilization ... exists as a definition of individuality as subjected sovereignty.<sup>60</sup>

For Foucault, humanist critical thought operates on the basis of objective and normative statements which depend on true notions of man's subjectivity as the critical principle of differentiation—hence, christian, marxian, existential, national socialist and stalinist varieties of humanism.<sup>61</sup> Enlightenment, by way of contrast, requires the philosopher to have a reflective relation to the present. He keeps an eye on the link between the status of truth, which grounds critique, and freedom as it is played out in political, economic, social, institutional and cultural events and

<sup>56</sup> Foucault, "Politics and Ethics", p. 374. For a discussion of Heidegger's relation to national socialism, see Zimmerman, *Heidegger's Confrontation with Modernity*, ch. 3.

<sup>57</sup> Foucault, "Entretien avec Michel Foucault (1971)", pp. 164-165.

<sup>58</sup> Foucault, "La situation de Cuvier", p. 65.

<sup>59</sup> Sartre, *Existentialism and Humanism*, p. 55.

<sup>60</sup> Foucault, "Revolutionary Action", pp. 221-222.

<sup>61</sup> "From this, we must not conclude that everything that has ever been associated with humanism is to be rejected, but that the humanistic thematic is in itself too supple, too diverse, too inconsistent to serve as an axis for reflection". Foucault, "'What is Enlightenment?'" , p. 44.



## *An Introduction to Foucault's Critical History of Thought*

processes. Foucault then refuses to be a part of the blackmail of enlightenment, which supporters of its humanist path hold him to ransom with: either one befriends it and remains within its history of reason, or one is a foe of enlightenment whose critical history embraces an irrationalism along Nietzsche's path.<sup>62</sup> After all, to analyse the ambivalence of reason is not to argue that the eighteenth century bourgeois *philosophe* is responsible for the gulag.<sup>63</sup> Nor, for that matter, does it imply a historical relation between enlightenment and totalitarianism.<sup>64</sup> Rather, it is to say that humanism's desire to see the glass half-full must be tempered by the vision of the skeptic, whose alternative half-empty glass is equally true and necessary if the optimist is to be held accountable for the ambivalence of his reason. Irrespective of his critics' dogmatism—one is for or against, a friend or foe, of enlightenment—Foucault practices critique on humanism, as well as *savoir, pouvoir* and ethico-morality, in the name of an analysis of finitude, of who we are, and a subsequent ontology that is apposite to these limits. From his nietzschean path, Foucault is not so much a foe of enlightenment as of its monopolisation by humanism, which "can be opposed by a principle of critique and a permanent creation of ourselves in our autonomy: that is, a principle that is at the heart of the historical consciousness that the Enlightenment has of itself".<sup>65</sup> In this light, Foucault is clearly a friend of enlightenment, and a foe of its hijack by humanism.

### **1.ii. *L'Histoire Critique de la Pensée***

In the preceding section, I have argued that there is no contradiction in Foucault's pro-enlightenment that is anti-humanism. The editors of his academic bad press, who purport that his anormative critique and amoral freedom result in professional disengagement, merely fail to comprehend alternatives to their humanist path to enlightenment. They are unable to acknowledge that, as an *engagé* philosopher whose critique and ontology are oriented by "[w]hat are we? as *Aufklärer*, as part of the Enlightenment?",<sup>66</sup> Foucault affirms critical thought along a nietzschean path. Indeed, his critique of humanist experience reveals that *pouvoir/savoir* defines our finitude, our background practice,<sup>67</sup> whilst his analyses of *savoir, pouvoir* and ethico-

<sup>62</sup> Foucault, "'What is Enlightenment?'" , pp. 42-44.

<sup>63</sup> Foucault, "La poussière et le nuage", p. 16.

<sup>64</sup> Foucault, "Postface", p. 36.

<sup>65</sup> Foucault, "'What is Enlightenment?'" , p. 44.

<sup>66</sup> Foucault, "The Subject and Power", p. 216.

<sup>67</sup> Dreyfus, "Heideggerian Themes in Foucault: Session II".

## *An Introduction to Foucault's Critical History of Thought*

morality implore an ethical subject whose ascetic practice of agonistic freedom resists these insuperable horizons. Because freedom for Foucault is the vis-à-vis of *pouvoir(/savoir)*—“since freedom must exist for power to be exerted, ... [it] is exercised only over free subjects, ... [and] without the possibility of recalcitrance, power would be equivalent to a physical determination”<sup>68</sup> —I look here at Foucault’s critical history that precedes and ushers in his conception of maturity.

In a short summary of his work for the *Dictionnaire des philosophes* in 1983, Foucault writes that if he is a member of any philosophical tradition it is the “*tradition critique qui est celle de Kant*”.<sup>69</sup> Although the synopsis is signed Maurice Florence the author is unquestionably Foucault,<sup>70</sup> who in keeping with the tradition of these brief intellectual biographies writes in the third person about Foucault’s “*entreprise Histoire critique de la pensée*”.<sup>71</sup> As opposed to his critics, I argue in this dissertation that Foucault can be taken at his word, for any journey in critical thought not only ages the relationship with oneself but it affords a clearer light in which to look at one’s work. Moreover, with the candid self-criticisms evident throughout his intellectual travels, which are part and parcel of the French tradition of *engagement* that thrives on public interviews and debates, newspaper articles, petitions, or the clarification of one’s work at the public defence of a thesis,<sup>72</sup> I believe that Foucault’s reflections are sincere, especially the claim that his critical history of thought upholds the tradition of kantian critical thought. But at the outset, what my reading of Foucault raises is the difficult question of how to understand his work and whose interpretations I draw on to lend me a hand.

To explain the diverse readings of Foucault, it is useful to recall his well-known riposte in 1969 to those who sought to label him a structuralist: “Do not ask me who I am and do not ask me to remain the same”.<sup>73</sup> Some fifteen years after this irreducibility of *œuvre* to author position, Foucault acknowledges that to change how one thinks is a game with oneself which, because it is constitutive of who one is, should not to be kept from one’s readers.<sup>74</sup> It is this oscillation between a desire for anonymity, which is mistakenly understood by humanists as a flight from critical thought, and the centrality in his life of the transformation of himself by

<sup>68</sup> Foucault, “The Subject and Power”, p. 221.

<sup>69</sup> Foucault, “Foucault”, p. 631.

<sup>70</sup> Gordon, “Man of action in a world of thought”, p. 10

<sup>71</sup> Foucault, “Foucault”, p. 631.

<sup>72</sup> For example, Jacques Derrida retraces the first twenty years of his philosophical venture in his thesis defence for the *doctorat ès lettres*. See Derrida, “The time of a thesis”.

<sup>73</sup> Foucault, *The Archeaology of Knowledge*, p. 18.

<sup>74</sup> Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, p. 8.

## *An Introduction to Foucault's Critical History of Thought*

thought, such that he wears his mind on his sleeve, which accounts for the often diametrically opposed interpretations of Foucault.<sup>75</sup> James Miller, for example, cites Nietzsche's aphorism, become who you are, to justify his controversial reading of Foucault's philosophy as a mirror of his personality.<sup>76</sup> At the same time, Macey alludes to a nietzschean maxim—scorn all the learned dust of biography—to reiterate Foucault's hostility to any association of the author to his *œuvre*. Macey hereby claims that, because of his many lives, Foucault's critical thought is separate from his personalities.<sup>77</sup> And, sandwiched between Miller and Macey, Didier Eribon suggests that Foucault is a child of his times whose critical thought reflects and directs French philosophy between the 1950s and 1980s.<sup>78</sup> As far as the dissertation is concerned, it is not vital to have a sense of who Foucault is as a private individual, though I do draw on all three biographers for personal, professional and political contextualisations of his critical thought.

Besides these biographical expositions, there are intellectual interpretations of Foucault, too. Once again, his elusive self-presentation produces numerous viewpoints, and Foucault says that he is neither a philosopher nor a writer, but someone who does historical and political research.<sup>79</sup> Similarly, he has no theory or methodology,<sup>80</sup> just fields of interest, out of and in respect of which he develops analytical tools.<sup>81</sup> As a consequence, intellectual interpretations of Foucault tend to be selective or to bridge academic disciplines. Typically, they are sympathetic<sup>82</sup> and exegetical,<sup>83</sup> although for the most part these intellectual interpretations range from what critical contributions Foucault can make to sociology,<sup>84</sup> politics,<sup>85</sup> history<sup>86</sup> or philosophy,<sup>87</sup> to inter-disciplinary anthologies which are organised around his critical history.<sup>88</sup> During my research for this dissertation, these intellectual

<sup>75</sup> Foucault, "Verité, pouvoir et soi", p. 777.

<sup>76</sup> Miller, *La Passion Foucault*, pp. 9-24.

<sup>77</sup> Macey, *The Lives of Michel Foucault*, pp. xi-xxiii.

<sup>78</sup> Eribon, *Michel Foucault (1926-1984)*, pp. 7-13.

<sup>79</sup> Foucault, "Le pouvoir, une bête magnifique", p. 376.

<sup>80</sup> Foucault, "Entretien avec Michel Foucault (1971)", pp. 156-158.

<sup>81</sup> Foucault, "Pouvoir et savoir", pp. 404-405.

<sup>82</sup> Major-Poetzl, *Michel Foucault's Archaeology of Western Culture*.

<sup>83</sup> McHoul and Grace, *A Foucault Primer*.

<sup>84</sup> Smart, *Michel Foucault*.

<sup>85</sup> Barry, Osborne and Rose (eds.), *Foucault and political reason*.

<sup>86</sup> Goldstein (ed.), *Foucault and the Writing of History*.

<sup>87</sup> Armstrong (ed.), *Michel Foucault: Philosopher*.

<sup>88</sup> Couzens Hoy (ed.), *Foucault: A Critical Reader*; Gane and Johnson (eds.), *Foucault's New Domains*; Lloyd and Thacker (eds.), *The Impact of Michel Foucault on the Social Sciences and Humanities*.

## *An Introduction to Foucault's Critical History of Thought*

interpretations have helped me to clarify some of the difficult aspects of Foucault's writings.

There are, thirdly, philosophical interpretations of Foucault, and my reading of his self-designated critical history is related to them. To be sure, other commentators discern a core philosophical theme at the heart of Foucault's writings, too, whether his ethic of free thought,<sup>89</sup> interpretive analytics,<sup>90</sup> topos of the symbolic,<sup>91</sup> experiences of thinking,<sup>92</sup> or political anatomy.<sup>93</sup> In each case, these commentators distinguish what they take to be Foucault's main philosophical theme, and some actually worked in close collaboration with him, for example, James Bernauer (who attended Foucault's courses in Paris and America),<sup>94</sup> Hubert Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow (who, as Foucault's interlocutors at Berkeley, enabled him to "undertake a theoretical and methodological reformulation"),<sup>95</sup> and Alan Sheridan (who has translated many of Foucault's books into English). However, they neither develop my philosophical theme of critical history as it is defined by Foucault himself, nor do they apprehend my idea of the continuity in his work of critical thought which, mindful of Kant's understanding of enlightenment, is articulated through Nietzsche's priority of critique before maturity.

In addition, these commentators interpret their philosophical themes in parallel to a periodisation of Foucault's writings—usually, an archæology of knowledge and a genealogy of both power and the subject<sup>96</sup>—which allows them to view some periods as more decisive than others. For instance, Sheridan hails Foucault's post-archæological political anatomy of truth and power as a model post-marxist political theory and practice,<sup>97</sup> Rajchman highlights Foucault's early 1970s turn to Nietzsche as a decisive reformulation of his work,<sup>98</sup> Bernauer distinguishes Foucault's progression through cathartic, dissonant, dissident and ecstatic critical thought,<sup>99</sup> and Dreyfus and Rabinow speak of how Foucault's

<sup>89</sup> Rajchman, *Michel Foucault*, p. 5.

<sup>90</sup> Dreyfus and Rabinow, *Michel Foucault*, p. xxii.

<sup>91</sup> Racevskis, *Michel Foucault and the Subversion of Intellect*, p. 30.

<sup>92</sup> Bernauer, "Michel Foucault's Ecstatic Thinking", p. 45.

<sup>93</sup> Sheridan, *Michel Foucault*, p. 217.

<sup>94</sup> Bernauer, "Michel Foucault's Ecstatic Thinking", p. 76, f. 8 and p. 77, f. 17.

<sup>95</sup> Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, p. 8.

<sup>96</sup> McHoul and Grace, *A Foucault Primer*, p. viii.

<sup>97</sup> Sheridan, *Michel Foucault*, p. 221.

<sup>98</sup> Rajchman, *Michel Foucault*, p. 114.

<sup>99</sup> Bernauer, "Michel Foucault's Ecstatic Thinking", p. 46.

## *An Introduction to Foucault's Critical History of Thought*

interests shift away from discursive practices after May 1968.<sup>100</sup> While I also follow the standard division of Foucault's work into periods – archaeology, genealogy and, when combined, critical history – I place a greater emphasis on, firstly, the specific target of each critique, namely, humanism's objectivity, normativity and subjectivity. Secondly, I argue that these mutually inclusive axes of humanism's experience, which describe finitude in the present, allow Foucault to articulate who we are *qua* subjects of knowledge who are the same, subjects of power who are both objectified and subjected, and subjects who suffer the submission of subjectivity. Thirdly, I also detail how, once Foucault's archaeological, genealogical and critical historical critiques politicise the experience of who we are along humanism's path to enlightenment,<sup>101</sup> they provide alternative conceptions of *savoir*, *pouvoir* and ethico-morality, which enables him to carve out a critical ontology that is pertinent to the present.

In its own right, Foucault's critical history of thought can be distinguished from a history of both ideas and mentalities, which analyse systems of representation and human behaviour, respectively. Foucault says that thought allows one to step back from one's conduct and to present it to oneself as an object in order to question its meaning.<sup>102</sup> Thought permits one to apprehend the historicity of forms of experience rather than, as in the case of humanism, to see thought as the prerogative of the capacities of the philosophical subject. Foucault hereby circumvents a philosophical anthropology, which grounds humanism's account of experience, with a nominalist reduction of its claims about the subject's autonomy and recognition.<sup>103</sup> He conceives of experience in the domain of the history of thought, where it is formed, developed and transformed. The aim is to problematise experience in order to reveal the givens, which are dispersed within the correlative fields of objectivity, normativity and subjectivity, and through which the subject is constituted.<sup>104</sup> Subsequently, these givens are developed into questions, which thought answers, for example, with the concepts of *savoir*, *pouvoir* and ethico-morality.<sup>105</sup> For Foucault, it is not the transcendental, historical, political or interpretive capacities of self-consciousness, or anything else akin to man's

<sup>100</sup> Dreyfus and Rabinow, *Michel Foucault*, p. 104.

<sup>101</sup> Relatedly, Lawrence Kritzman proposes a foucauldian politics of experience, which "elicits new hope by problematizing the rules and institutions that have reified the substance of daily life". Kritzman, "Foucault and the Politics of Experience", p. xxv.

<sup>102</sup> Foucault, "Polemics, Politics, and Problematizations", p. 388.

<sup>103</sup> Foucault, "Preface to *The History of Sexuality*, Volume II", p. 334.

<sup>104</sup> Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, p. 4.

<sup>105</sup> Foucault, "Polemics, Politics, and Problematizations", p. 389.

## *An Introduction to Foucault's Critical History of Thought*

authentic being, which act as the conditions of possibility for experience. Instead, experience “is the rationalization of a process, itself provisional, which results in a subject, or rather, in subjects ... [who display] a subjectivity which is of course only one of the given possibilities of organization of a self-consciousness”.<sup>106</sup>

Insofar as a critique of experience is prior to an ontology, critical history gauges “the politics immanent in history and the history indispensable for politics”.<sup>107</sup> It analyses “what in the past is still operative in *our* present”.<sup>108</sup> The indispensable history that enables politics is the unknown processes, movements and forces that define events,<sup>109</sup> whilst the politics immanent in history concerns the truth which, if not the most profound lie *à la* Nietzsche, is, as Canguilhem suggests, the most recent error that emerges out of events.<sup>110</sup> In respect of the latter, Foucault’s critique focuses on what, for the humanist, is the more familiar politics of social contract liberalism and the historical materialist, phenomenological and communitarian variations on a hegelian theme. Critical history, which lies between social history and logical analyses of thought,<sup>111</sup> illuminates the micro-political heritage of these forms of humanist critical thought. It analyses the objective, normative and subjective axes of truth which have formed, and continue to constitute, who we are in the *actuel passé*, or the present, which is Canguilhem’s term for what Foucault says is our “extremely rich and complex philosophical relationship” to the enlightenment.<sup>112</sup>

Foucault’s critical history demands *engagement* from the philosopher, too, for pro-enlightenment critique that is anti-humanism is necessarily concerned with a post-humanist mode of being which can sustain maturity. Initially, through the practice of critical history, the critical ontologist constitutes his subjective experience.<sup>113</sup> But, apart from its transformation of the self, critique has political connotations, too, as it directly relates to who we are as subjects who think and act.<sup>114</sup> In this regard, the critical ontologist tests the limits of experience, and if necessary he inaugurates the agonistic transformation of it.<sup>115</sup> Of course, it is not

<sup>106</sup> Foucault, “The Return of Morality”, p. 253.

<sup>107</sup> Foucault, “Power and Sex”, p. 121.

<sup>108</sup> Rajchman, *Michel Foucault*, p. 31.

<sup>109</sup> Foucault, “La scène de la philosophie”, p. 573.

<sup>110</sup> Foucault, “La vie: l’expérience et la science”, pp. 775-776.

<sup>111</sup> Foucault, “Verité, pouvoir et soi”, p. 778.

<sup>112</sup> Foucault, “Postface”, p. 37.

<sup>113</sup> Foucault, “Interview de Michel Foucault”, p. 667.

<sup>114</sup> Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, p. 9.

<sup>115</sup> Foucault, “Jean Hyppolite. 1907-1968”, p. 781.

## *An Introduction to Foucault's Critical History of Thought*

that Foucault's pessimistic activism automatically assumes that humanist experience is defective. Rather, it is dangerous because it fails to recognise its limitations, which means that, like ethical subjectivity, critique is a never-ending process.<sup>116</sup> In his role as a critical ontologist, Foucault accepts Kant's invitation to participate personally and collectively in the ongoing development of enlightenment.<sup>117</sup> Foucault's critique proceeds:

with the analysis of ourselves as beings who are historically determined, to a certain extent, by the Enlightenment. ... [Critique is] oriented toward the contemporary 'limits of the necessary', that is, toward what is ... no longer indispensable for the constitution of ourselves as autonomous subjects.<sup>118</sup>

Apart from a personal and political resource for the critical ontologist, who analyses reason's ambivalent aspects, thought is a practice which poses the question of a subject and an object. Critical history examines the conditions of *pouvoir/savoir*, which form and modify the relations of the subject to the object and make possible the human sciences' *connaissance* that is necessary to understand ourselves in the present.<sup>119</sup> Through critical history's twin moments of archæology and genealogy, Foucault concentrates on the interrelation between the subject and the object in two modes, the relations of subjectivation and the relations of objectivation. The question, he says,

is to determine that which has to be the subject, on what conditions it is subjected, the status it must have, and the position it must occupy in reality or the faculty of intuition in order to be a legitimate subject of this or that *connaissance* – in brief, it is a question of determining its mode of subjectivation; ... . But the question is also, and at the same time, to establish under what conditions a thing becomes an object of *connaissance*, how it is problematised as an object to be known, by what procedures of division it is subjected, and the precise aspect of it which is considered relevant. This is a matter of ascertaining its mode of objectivation.<sup>120</sup>

<sup>116</sup> Foucault, "On the Genealogy of Ethics", p. 343.

<sup>117</sup> Foucault, "'What is Enlightenment?'", pp. 34-35.

<sup>118</sup> Foucault, "'What is Enlightenment?'", p. 43.

<sup>119</sup> Foucault, "Foucault", pp. 631-632.

<sup>120</sup> "La question est de déterminer ce que doit être le sujet, à quelle condition il est soumis, quel statut il doit avoir, quelle position il doit occuper dans le réel ou dans l'imaginaire, pour devenir sujet légitime de tel ou tel type de connaissance; bref, il s'agit de déterminer son mode de 'subjectivation'; ... . Mais la question est aussi et en même temps de déterminer à quelles conditions quelque chose peut devenir un objet pour une connaissance possible, comment elle a pu être problématisée comme objet à connaître, à quelle procédure de découpage elle a pu être soumise, la part d'elle-même qui est considérée comme pertinente. Il s'agit donc de déterminer son mode d'objectivation". Foucault, "Foucault", p. 632.

## *An Introduction to Foucault's Critical History of Thought*

By enunciating the relations of subjectivation and objectivation of a specific discursive object—for example, the madman, the delinquent or the pervert—Foucault actualises in thought the games of truth in respect of which subjectivity is constituted. Intrigued by the fact “that there is so little truth in truth”,<sup>121</sup> Foucault’s critical history analyses the emergence of games of truth in both discursive and non-discursive practices. The focus of his critique is the history of veridictions, namely, the *pouvoir/savoir* which, as an “institutionalized system for the production of knowledge in regulated language”,<sup>122</sup> verify that one speaks truly. Foucault limits his focus to scientific,<sup>123</sup> political and ethico-moral games of truth, where through the processual relations of subjectivation and objectivation man is posited as an object of bodies of *connaissance*—that is, as a subject of knowledge, power and freedom—which render experience objective, normative and subjective.<sup>124</sup> In virtue of a critical history of games of truth, Foucault writes that the subject “is the general theme of my research” and not, as his critics believe, a late addition to it.<sup>125</sup> Indeed, Foucault asks if it is possible to pose a more classical philosophical question than that which examines the relation between objectivity, normativity and subjectivity. Further, he wonders if there is a more systematic way to answer it than to research each independently of the other as it appears in humanism in order, through *savoir*, *pouvoir* and ethico-morality—specifically, in their correlation in the domain of thought through which sex is experienced<sup>126</sup>—to reconceive the self’s relation to thought, which is mediated by games of truth where one is simultaneously an object and a subject.<sup>127</sup>

This overview of critical history shows that, together with Rawls and Taylor, Foucault practices enlightenment critical thought. Also, like them, he acknowledges after Kant that, whilst we do not “live in an *enlightened age*”, we do “live in an *age of enlightenment*”.<sup>128</sup> Unlike his critics, however, Foucault does not believe that humanism can shepherd us to an enlightened age via reason that is unequivocally universal in its remit. Instead, to the extent that reason always falls short of its gesture of universalism, which humanism exacerbates such that it is part of the

<sup>121</sup> Foucault, quoted in and by Veyne, “The Final Foucault and His Ethics”, p. 8, f. 1.

<sup>122</sup> Bové, “Discourse”, p. 53.

<sup>123</sup> As Smart says, this game of truth aspires to ‘scientificity’, or, for Rabinow, ‘scientific classification’. Smart, *Michel Foucault*, pp. 106-107; Rabinow, “Introduction”, pp. 7-11.

<sup>124</sup> Foucault, “Foucault”, pp. 632-633.

<sup>125</sup> Foucault, “The Subject and Power”, p. 209.

<sup>126</sup> Foucault, “Foucault”, pp. 635-636.

<sup>127</sup> Foucault, “Verité, pouvoir et soi”, pp. 782-783.

<sup>128</sup> Kant, “What is Enlightenment?”, p. 290.



## *An Introduction to Foucault's Critical History of Thought*

problem rather than the solution to a critique of history and its reason, we oscillate between an age of enlightenment and the enlightened age this gesture hints at. Thus, apart from their concurrence about Kant's call for critique and maturity, these philosophers differ fundamentally over how to do critical thought. Disputes about the history and potential of reason to realise freedom scar the academic landscape, from the liberal and communitarian debate, to the modern versus post-modern controversy and the politico-philosophical opposition to humanism in France. The distinction is clearest between the endeavours of Rawls, Taylor and Habermas, who promote Kant's paradigm of freedom as the public use of reason in which epistemological and political critique that is grounded in the philosophical subject proposes an enlightened age of autonomy and recognition, and Foucault, whose critical history advances *savoir, pouvoir* and ethico-morality subsequent to its focus on the costs of humanism's partial objectivity, its normativity that confines those who are different and objectifies and subjects those who are normal, and its subjectivity that equates to a disciplined body and a regulated citizenry. In fact, to the extent that the enlightenment discovers freedom and invents practices which submit subjectivity, Foucault's critical history that uncovers disciplinisation, or subjection in the guise of freedom,<sup>129</sup> precedes his outline of a mode of being.<sup>130</sup>

Hence, in defence of Foucault from the criticisms of his critical history and ontology, which with their alleged anormative critique and amoral freedom embody his anti-enlightenment, I would like to argue that critical history is fundamental to an adequate conception of the experience which limits the self's resolution and courage to use his reason, as well as to an account of *savoir, pouvoir* and ethico-morality, which herald critical ontology's ethical subjectivity as an agonistic practice of freedom *qua* maturity in the present. In a word, Foucault's critical history is central to his nietzschean path that is anti-humanism and pro-kantian enlightenment.

### **1.iii. The Relations of the Parts to the Whole and its Limits**

The opposed practices of critical thought—humanism's legislative and interpretive critiques and Foucault's critical historical critique—structure the parts of the dissertation. In chapters 2 and 3, I first mark out the former's path to enlightenment. Humanism, I suggest, is sketched by Rousseau, designed by Kant, layed by Hegel and maintained by Rawls and Taylor, all of whom propose

<sup>129</sup> Baker, "A Foucauldian French Revolution?", p. 188.

<sup>130</sup> Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, p. 222.

## *An Introduction to Foucault's Critical History of Thought*

epistemological or political critique as the vehicle of maturity. Following this, in chapters 4, 5 and 6, I explicate Foucault's archæological, genealogical and critical historical critiques of objective knowledge, normative power and subjective moral identity, and I also give an account of his alternative conceptualisations of *savoir*, *pouvoir* and ethico-morality. I then conclude Foucault's nietzschean path to enlightenment in chapter 7, where I articulate the ontology that comes out of these three critiques and how, in tandem with his modern attitude of critical history, the critical ontologist's ascetic æsthetic ethical subjectivity amounts to Foucault's kantian derived and nietzschean inspired critical thought.

I commence chapter 2 with Thomas Hobbes' and John Locke's introduction into the history of reason of a philosophy of the subject *qua* man, whose ability to ground knowledge suffices to regulate the remit of the juridical state in furtherance of freedom. In Rousseau's criticism of man's bourgeois perspective on knowledge and power, I claim that his substantiation of classical liberal autonomy through the political process of the *volonté générale*, which leads to recognition, provides the blueprint for humanist critical thought's path to enlightenment. The rousseauian subject's authentic being, or his capacity for reason and language and his desire for re-assurance with others, is then the prototype for Kant and Hegel, who personify the epistemological critique that procures autonomy and recognition. In this light, I first examine Kant in respect of his definition of the critical thought that can sustain enlightenment. I outline his account of critical philosophy, which Kant uses to ground both the subject's apparent knowledge in transcendental idealism and man's autonomy in the idea of freedom that is the cornerstone of *Moralität*. For his part, I demonstrate that Hegel's scientific philosophy takes him beyond Kant to an absolute idealism of actual knowledge. Similarly, I illustrate that Hegel's rousseauian notion of recognition, which is affirmed by *Sittlichkeit*, concretises kantian autonomy.

Insofar as political critique that promises political liberty and political liberation is concerned, I argue in chapter 3 that Rawls' political liberalism utilises a procedural justice to normatively regulate juridical power in the interests of the liberty of the individual. In response, Taylor, who desires to imbue the juridical state of rawlsian right with the hypergoods central to man's identity, articulates a substantive justice that uses politics to effect recognition. Hence, because the communal good is to liberal right what *Sittlichkeit* is to *Moralität*, namely, the condition of possibility for recognition that enables the self-actualisation of autonomy, I close my examination of humanist critical thought at the end of chapter 3 with the suggestion that, just as *Geist* envelopes *Aufklärung* at the start of

## *An Introduction to Foucault's Critical History of Thought*

the nineteenth century, at the end of the twentieth century political liberalism compromises with a politics of recognition around a notion of maturity that I term embedded individuality. On humanism's path to enlightenment, philosophers of the subject are not much more inventive when it comes to freedom than they are when it comes to critique, which is why they are caught in a vicious circle where one humanist's maturity is another man's immaturity.

To explain the intellectual climate that gives rise to Foucault's critical thought, I start chapter 4 with a contextualisation of the history of reason in France. Although Kant is side-lined in the 1930s by a marxian, existential and phenomenological interpretation of Hegel, I show how the transcendental dialectic is attached to the subject's transcendental capacity of apperception to constitute the foundation of objectivity in the human sciences, which produce empirical knowledge of man's being. It is this formal *a priori* of man, who knows and is known, or what Foucault in *The Order of Things* terms the empirico-transcendental *doublet*, that archæological critique reveals to be contingent upon the historical *a priori* of *savoir*. Next, I portray Foucault's attempt to use a theory of language, which he finds in the counter-human science of linguistics, as an alternative condition of possibility for man for objectivity in those counter-human sciences such as psychoanalysis and ethnology. Yet, while Foucault exposes the inability of humanist knowledge to teach one how to think freely, the *connaissance* in these discursive practices that is causally related to *savoir* detaches them from the world, which May 1968 reveals to be in need of transformation. To meet this challenge, I claim that the archæologist frames *savoir* against the non-discursive practices of *pouvoir*.

As such, I argue in chapter 5 that the critical historian uses genealogical critique to problematise humanism's political critique. A proto-genealogy of humanist normativity in *Madness and Civilisation*, for example, reveals its negative condition of possibility as the confined exclusion of the mad, while the genealogy proper of the objectification and subjection of the juridical subject of right is elaborated in *Discipline and Punish* and *The History of Sexuality*.<sup>131</sup> In this respect, I contend that discipline and regulation, rather than the right or the good, characterise the normative experience proposed by Rawls and Taylor. Further to these constraint on how to act freely, I describe how, in response to the question of how *pouvoir* is exercised, Foucault's critical history brings to light the extra-judicial

<sup>131</sup> I write of *The History of Sexuality* in reference to *La Volonté de savoir*, volume 1 of Foucault's project, which is translated as *An Introduction* (also, in respect of volumes 2 and 3, I refer to *The Use of Pleasure* and *The Care of the Self*, which are direct translations of *L'Usage des plaisirs* and *Le souci de soi*).

## *An Introduction to Foucault's Critical History of Thought*

productive mechanisms of *pouvoir*, which underlie the repressive mechanisms of a theory of state-centred power. Thus, my point of departure in chapter 6 is a discussion of what is the nature of *pouvoir*, which Foucault answers through his reconceptualisation of capillary *pouvoir* as governmentality, one's action upon the actions of others, that places its vis-à-vis of freedom on his agenda. After the archæological and genealogical critiques of objectivity and normativity, I maintain that a critical history of subjectivity analyses the political rationality exercised by the modern state, which through humanism's hermeneutic relation to self effects the submission of subjectivity. In reply, I suggest that Foucault investigates the subject of desire in *The Use of Pleasure* and *The Care of the Self*, where he uncovers ancient practices of the self in which the self constitutes himself as an ethical subject of his actions in furtherance of a stylised aesthetics of existence. Finally, in chapter 7 I summarise the above argument by contrasting the way the critical ontologist does critical thought with that of the legislator and interpreter. I also respond to the criticisms of Foucault, which entails combining his ontology of an agonistic practice of freedom from chapter 6 with the critical historical critiques of chapters 4 and 5, such that I conclude that he is an exemplar of enlightenment critical thought.

All that now remains is to reveal the limits beyond which this dissertation neither seeks nor is able to go, and to highlight the silences in it. Firstly, although I have employed the primary texts of the protagonists of humanism's path to enlightenment, my aim in doing so is not a definitive reading but a plausible interpretation. To ensure this, as well as to lend me support, I refer in chapter 2 to several respected commentators on Kant (Henry Allison and Lewis White Beck) and Hegel (Robert Pippin, Taylor and Merold Westphal), and in chapter 3 I refer to prominent commentators on contemporary critical thought (amongst others, Will Kymlicka, Raymond Plant, Michael Sandel and Michael Walzer), although the exegesis of Rawls and Taylor is my own.

In the same vein, my interest in and aim with Foucault is not a decisive interpretation in respect of the philosophical themes of his eminent commentators, whom I mentioned in section 1.ii.. Rather, I have a personal and political concern in my reading of Foucault—personal, because his conceptualisation of experience in the present, and what freedom is in the face of it, strikes a chord with me; and political, because I believe that Foucault's critique and maturity are indicative of how to practice critical thought. But if I do not offer any ultimate interpretation of Foucault, I hope at least that my reading is sufficiently persuasive with regard to critical thought and a philosopher acutely attuned to who we are.

In this respect, my understanding of Foucault is primarily mediated through

## *An Introduction to Foucault's Critical History of Thought*

the English translations of the main texts alluded to in the preceding paragraphs, and numerous interviews and articles published as *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice; Power/Knowledge; The Foucault Reader; and Politics, Philosophy, Culture*. Further, I have made extensive use of his collected works published posthumously in French as the four volume *Dits et Écrits 1954-1988*. These contain numerous interviews and articles, as yet untranslated, which demonstrate that from the start of his career Foucault was an unremitting advocate of enlightenment. As with the German sources in the dissertation, I have relied on practical language skills to read *Dits et Écrits 1954-1988*, and where I have directly quoted the German or French I have put the original in a reference note to ensure that the meaning of my translation is not at the expense of accuracy or misrepresentation. A last scholarly note concerns citations, which appear as (reference) footnotes in the order of author, book or article title (often abbreviated), and page, section, book and/or chapter number. The full reference can then be found in the bibliography.

A final silence to be accounted for concerns the absence of empirical politics in a dissertation on critique and maturity, especially as I conceive an agonistic freedom in ethico-political resistance to the experience of *pouvoir/savoir*. Firstly, I defer to William Connolly's observation that politics not only involves the open-ended interaction of individuals and groups, who share a range of concepts imperfectly, but it allows people to resolve, accommodate and transcend initial differences within the context of political discourse.<sup>132</sup> In this sense, critical thought is itself a praxis with important political implications.<sup>133</sup> It turns on what Walter Gallie designates as essentially contested concepts, "[o]ne very desirable consequence of ... [which is] a marked raising of the ... quality of arguments in the dispute of the contestant parties".<sup>134</sup> Secondly, examples of contested concepts within the practice of critical thought include truth, power, freedom and critique itself, which as Kimberly Hutchings argues to substantiate her idea of a politics of critique "reflects the deep link between philosophical and political conditions and problems".<sup>135</sup> Whence, for instance, Owen's trajectory of critique from Nietzsche to Weber and Foucault, which he uses "to re-open the question of the form of critique against Habermas' efforts to impose closure on this question".<sup>136</sup> It is this politics inherent to critical thought that follows in my examination of knowledge, power

<sup>132</sup> Connolly, *The Terms of Political Discourse*, pp. 6-7.

<sup>133</sup> Hutchings, *Kant, Critique and Politics*, pp. 3-5.

<sup>134</sup> Gallie, "Essentially Contested Concepts", pp. 171-175 and p. 193.

<sup>135</sup> Hutchings, *Kant, Critique and Politics*, p. 7.

<sup>136</sup> Owen, *Maturity and Modernity*, p. 3.

### *An Introduction to Foucault's Critical History of Thought*

and autonomy and recognition in humanism, and it pervades Foucault's reconceptualisations of *savoir*, *pouvoir* and ethico-morality in his critical history of who we are in the present, and his critical ontology that posits how to be otherwise. So although, as Alasdair MacIntyre argues, critical thought leaves everything as it is except concepts, this in itself is politics,

since to possess a concept involves ... being able to behave in certain ways in certain circumstances, ... . [T]o alter concepts, whether by modifying existing concepts or by making new concepts available or by destroying old ones, is to alter behaviour. ... A history which takes this point seriously, which is concerned with the role of philosophy in relation to actual conduct, cannot be philosophically neutral.<sup>137</sup>

<sup>137</sup> MacIntyre, *A Short History of Ethics*, pp. 2-3.

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## *Epistemological Critique in Kant and Hegel*

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My aim in chapters 2 and 3 is to portray how autonomy and recognition are secured by epistemological and political critique along humanism's path to enlightenment, which is the point of departure for Foucault's critical history of the experiential thought that defines our limits. To begin with, I discern the origins of a philosophy of the subject, who grounds man's order of things. After Hobbes' reduction of objective experience to a material ontology, Locke's deployment of the subject's rational capacities makes freedom a matter of the non-interference by others in the autonomous will of the man who desires and knows, respectively. In contrast, for Rousseau knowledge of the world depends on the sociality of language, whilst a sense of oneself as free is based on a universal capacity for reason that is mediated by the establishment and continual affirmation of the *volonté générale*. Autonomy only gets beyond pride and alienation if it is substantiated by a process of recognition, and I argue that even if he does not specify the province of man's reason Rousseau still heralds epistemological and political critique.

It is out of a desire to thwart dogmatism and skepticism through limiting the remit of man's objective experience that Kant's critical philosophy introduces *Aufklärung*, the obligation to think and act freely, which he meets with a metaphysics of experience and the idea of freedom that links moral autonomy, duty and *Moralität*. Apart from the centrality of Kant to enlightenment critical thought, he is the spur for Hegel's critique of kantian man's bifurcation from his empirical self, who lives in and is shaped by the world. To alleviate diremption, I trace Hegel's advocacy of a phenomenology of the objective experience of *Geist* and the moral moderation of man's recognition by the state, which is the culmination of *Sittlichkeit*. From its origins in Hobbes and Locke, and via its reformulation with Rousseau, Kant's and Hegel's epistemological critique of things acts as the

precondition for autonomy and recognition in humanist critical thought,<sup>1</sup> and in chapter 3 I will explain how Rawls and Taylor similarly direct humanism's path to enlightenment, but with a political critique of normative experience that regulates power on behalf of freedom. Notwithstanding, I shall argue in chapter 4 that because Kant's and Hegel's knowledge is the basis for an anthropocentric dialectical thought in twentieth century French philosophy which is founded on the identity of man, it affirms a perspectival objectivity that realises autonomy and recognition for those who are the same only.

## **2.i. The Philosophy of Man in Hobbes and Locke**

Hegel writes that after the reformation in the sixteenth century humanity "becomes aware of its having a value of its own in the morality, rectitude, probity and activity of man".<sup>2</sup> His words order the world and replace mediæval christianity's ontology of things, which are grounded in the word of God. As Heidegger portrays it, the subject of knowledge conquers the world as a picture via re-presentation. He sets out before and in relation to himself a thing as a structured image.<sup>3</sup> With his essence of the will to will, or man's subjectivity of *humanitas*, he—man—replaces Him as the lord of being.<sup>4</sup> And while Descartes' *cogito ergo sum* is perhaps the most famous conception of man, Hobbes is the first to make an explicit connection between his capacity for knowledge and freedom,<sup>5</sup> and in this section I show how the question of a human epistemology as the ground of autonomy is answered by man, the sum of contradictions, who Hobbes and Locke seek to discover and order.<sup>6</sup>

Hobbes' desire to order the politico-religious chaos of mid-seventeenth century England forces him to consider who man is as a potential source of knowledge. To this end, he embarks upon his quest with reason rather than the *prudentia* of tradition, which is propagated by christian ontology. For Hobbes, the wisdom of reason derives from speech, which forms the basis of intersubjective relations. It allows man to gather the things he re-presents in concepts—"True and False", Hobbes says, "are attributes of Speech, not of Things".<sup>7</sup> Secondly, he

<sup>1</sup> O'Hagan, "On Hegel's Critique", p. 135.

<sup>2</sup> Hegel, *Philosophy of History*, p. 344.

<sup>3</sup> Heidegger, "The Age of the World Picture", pp. 132-135.

<sup>4</sup> Heidegger, "Letter on 'Humanism'", pp. 243-247.

<sup>5</sup> For Hobbes, what man knows is true because his "*Knowledge of Fact ... is nothing else, but Sense and Memory, and is Absolute Knowledge*"; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ch. IX, p. 147.

<sup>6</sup> Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, § 97, p. 61.

<sup>7</sup> Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ch. IV, p. 105.



combines speech with a mechanistic view of nature and a deductive scientific method,<sup>8</sup> which defines Hobbes' anti-metaphysical science of reason. Here, to read oneself as a means to know one's thoughts and passions is to read and know the thoughts and passions of others.<sup>9</sup> This mechanico-deductive approach instructs Hobbes that man's basic ontology is material, and he works from the first principle of autonomous man in a state of nature up to theorems about knowledge and power.<sup>10</sup>

The material nature of hobbesian man is determined by sensations and emotions, which interact with his ideas. When he moves directly toward or away from the thing imagined, man's reaction is unmediated, pure endeavour.<sup>11</sup> It is only when he deliberates on the thing he desires or wishes to avert that one discovers who man is for Hobbes. He is a self-mediated, mechanical subject who, aware *a priori* of his wants and preferences, knows no tranquillity of mind. Life is nothing but perpetual motion between the basic emotions of appetite and aversion.<sup>12</sup> Hobbesian man has no *summum bonum*.<sup>13</sup> His understanding is distinct from his will, and uppermost in his mind is his felicity, which requires the prioritisation of the will *qua* capacity to reason upon the activity necessary to realise the imperatives of the emotions. Hobbes' philosophy is a science of the consequences of the unhappy lives of mechanical men in a state of nature, where in virtue of their subjective naturall Passions their wills produce a condition of Warre.<sup>14</sup> In parallel, hobbesian moral philosophy points out the Lawes of Nature, for instance, liberty and justice, which enable men who have the capacity for self-institution to will their escape and covenant into Leviathan.<sup>15</sup> Together with man's innate capacity for speech, Hobbes turns a material ontology of perpetual motion into a right to political liberty, which Leviathan's sword guarantees to men in their attempts to gratify an insatiable will to happiness. The basic capacity of reason, which enables man to realise his desires and know the thoughts and passions of others, is

<sup>8</sup> Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ch. V.

<sup>9</sup> Hobbes, *Leviathan*, The Introduction.

<sup>10</sup> Balibar, "What is 'Man'?", pp. 221-223.

<sup>11</sup> Hobbes calls man's mental reaction to a sensation an idea, an idea committed to memory an image, the consciousness of an image imagination, all images remembered sensory experience and, insofar as he uses his memory to foresee and react to new sensations, Hobbes describes man's orientation by this experience as prudence. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, chs. I-III.

<sup>12</sup> Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ch. VI.

<sup>13</sup> Balibar, "What is 'Man'?", p. 215.

<sup>14</sup> Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ch. XIII.

<sup>15</sup> Balibar, "What is 'Man'?", p. 225; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, chs. XIV-XV.

## *Epistemological Critique in Kant and Hegel*

constitutive of a juridical state that harmonises intersubjective relations.<sup>16</sup> In Hobbes' elegant words,

[t]he finall ... Designe of men, ... in the introduction of that restraint upon themselves, ... is the foresight of their own preservation, and of a more contented life thereby; that is to say, of getting themselves out of the miserable condition of Warre, which is necessarily consequent ... to the naturall Passions of men, when there is no visible power to keep them in awe.<sup>17</sup>

A hobbesian material ontology discloses a speaking, mechanical man who desires in respect of his appetites and aversions. His words order an objective experience of things, and he authorises Leviathan's power in the interests of the fulfilment of his desires. But an even more innovative statement on man as the ground for epistemological critique of the world in the interests of autonomy comes from Locke, which he develops on the hypothesis that the man behind the mask of the cartesian ego is a *tabula rasa*.<sup>18</sup> For Locke, man's faculty of understanding enables the capacity of sensation that gives him simple ideas about the external objects of his senses, for this faculty is like a closet wholly shut from light with only a little hole left to let in the external resemblance of things. Secondly, through the capacity of reflection man observes the internal objects of his mind, which are independent of empirical things. He experiences himself by the ideas of, amongst others, thinking, doubting, loving and fearing.<sup>19</sup> Ideas that derive from either the objects of the senses or the operation of the mind are then lent meaning by reason, and from a foundation in empirically derived ideas man rationalises a knowledge of a thing-for-itself to arrive at complex ideas of substances, modes and relations.<sup>20</sup> Of most relevance, the rational capacity of consciousness, which procures phenomenal knowledge, is synonymous with man's self-mediation of himself into what Locke terms the person, who is:

a thinking intelligent being, that has reason and reflection, and can consider itself as itself, the same thinking thing, in different times and places; which it does only by that *consciousness*, which is inseparable from thinking, and, it seems to me, essential to it ... . [B]y this every one is to himself that which he calls self. ... For, it being the same consciousness that makes a man be himself to

<sup>16</sup> Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ch. XXI- XVII.

<sup>17</sup> Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ch. XVII, p. 223.

<sup>18</sup> Locke, *An Essay concerning Human Understanding*, Book I, Chs. I-II, pp. 1-14. Locke also introduces philosophy to the concepts of the self (hence, *das Selbst* and *le soi* [in place of *le moi*]), consciousness (thus, *das Bewußtsein* instead of conscience, *das Gewissen*), self-consciousness (*das Selbst-Bewußtsein* and *le conscience de soi*), and personal identity. Balibar, "What is 'Man'?", pp. 233-234.

<sup>19</sup> Locke, *An Essay concerning Human Understanding*, Book II, Ch. I, pp. 26-33.

<sup>20</sup> Locke, *An Essay concerning Human Understanding*, Book II, Chs. XXII-XXVI, pp. 139-162.

## *Epistemological Critique in Kant and Hegel*

himself, personal identity depends on that only.<sup>21</sup>

Locke's concept of the person is reducible to and identifiable with consciousness *qua* self, who is aware of pleasure and pain and capable of happiness and misery.<sup>22</sup> Yet, because consciousness tends to be interrupted by forgetfulness, such that man loses sight of his past self, Locke introduces memory as the guarantor of the continuity of the person to himself.<sup>23</sup> Like Hobbes' mechanical man, who within the civil society he asks Leviathan to regulate is taken to be a Naturall Person whose words and actions are self-authored,<sup>24</sup> Locke also conceives of the self in terms of an intelligent agent with a capacity for law.<sup>25</sup> The forensic self is the epistemological condition behind right, reward and punishment, as well as the *raison d'être* of toleration, for happiness and misery are the concerns of each self and, collected as memory, define personal identity.<sup>26</sup> In essence, Locke's personal identity is constituted in a realm of knowledge that is distinct from power. It implies that nobody but the person has any right to the property of his body, whilst the power of property necessitates a mutually conducive civil society of toleration and bourgeois right that facilitates its exchange.<sup>27</sup> With Locke, the rational capacity of consciousness enables man's objective experience of both the things in the world as phenomena—a metaphysics of empirical realism—and the truth of his authentic being as a unique personal identity, an *a priori* autonomy, that calls for toleration, which the juridical state guarantees as political liberty.

### **2.ii. Rousseau and the Recognition of Self-Love**

In their attempts to create an enlightened, self-ruling humanity out of alienation from God,<sup>28</sup> Hobbes and Locke invoke a philosophy of the subject to stabilise objective experience. As a consequence, man procures political liberty from the juridical power that he also constitutes. Rousseau, however, rejects the exclusive English focus on autonomy, and he calls for a process of recognition in respect of

<sup>21</sup> Locke, *An Essay concerning Human Understanding*, Book II, Ch. XXVII, pp. 165-166.

<sup>22</sup> Locke, *An Essay concerning Human Understanding*, Book II, Ch. XXVII, pp. 170-171.

<sup>23</sup> Locke, *An Essay concerning Human Understanding*, Book II, Ch. XXVII, p. 165-169.

<sup>24</sup> Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ch. XVI.

<sup>25</sup> Locke, *An Essay concerning Human Understanding*, Book II, Ch. XXVII, p. 174.

<sup>26</sup> Locke, *An Essay concerning Human Understanding*, Book II, Ch. XXVII, p. 170. On current debates about Locke's concept of personal identity, see Lowe, *Kinds of Being*, pp. 115-137; Diamond, "The Importance of Being Human"; Wiggins, *Sameness and Substance*, pp. 150-187.

<sup>27</sup> Balibar, "What is 'Man'?", pp. 234-239.

<sup>28</sup> Velkley, "The Crisis of the End of Reason in Kant's Philosophy", p. 78.

the *volonté générale*, which enables man's self-actualisation. In so doing, he paves the way for Kant's understanding of enlightenment which promises autonomy, and for Hegel's desire for recognition from *Geist* in modernity, and I turn now to look at how Rousseau establishes the framework of freedom for humanist critical thought of epistemological and political critique.

Although he also beholds the spectacle of man raising himself from nothing by the light of reason,<sup>29</sup> Rousseau pleads that whilst Hobbes and Locke claim to know the true nature of man they do no more than confound him with the merchants they see daily before their eyes.<sup>30</sup> Hobbes' and Locke's misplaced advocacy of political liberty is a result of their philosophy of man's mechanical nature and sovereign memory. For Rousseau, man on his own has neither the capacity of speech with which to covenant out of a state of nature,<sup>31</sup> nor the words essential for his rational capacity of understanding to provide him with an objective experience of things.<sup>32</sup> In their conception of language's pre-social and pre-experiential existence, Hobbes and Locke simply re-iterate the metaphysical presuppositions of christian ontology, whereas Rousseau's emphasis on speech as the first social institution is indicative of what Derrida calls an epistemological break.<sup>33</sup> For Rousseau, language, society and a knowledge of the world evolve together, and although the autonomy implied by Hobbes and Locke might be definitive of modern man's authentic being, without recognition through political self-actualisation it remains unfulfilled.

In addition to Hobbes' and Locke's failure to appreciate the social nature of language, the modern arts and sciences in respect of which man mediates his

<sup>29</sup> Rousseau, "Discourse on the Arts and Sciences", p. 4.

<sup>30</sup> Rousseau, "Discourse on the Origin of Inequality", pp. 50-59.

<sup>31</sup> Rousseau speaks of the need to avoid the blunders of those "who, in reasoning on the state of nature, always import into it ideas gathered in a state of society", an example of which is the confusion between "an explanation of how languages already formed are taught, ... [which] by no means explains how languages were originally formed". The answer to the problem of the origin of language, Rousseau continues, can be discerned from men collected and compelled to live together, where "a common idiom must have arisen much more easily than among those who still wandered through the forests". Rousseau, "Discourse on the Origin of Inequality", p. 65 and p. 89.

<sup>32</sup> À la lockean man's capacity of reflection, via which he observes the internal objects of the mind or ideas, Rousseau suggests every general idea is purely intellectual. Nevertheless, he alludes to language as the condition of possibility for knowledge, as "general ideas cannot be introduced into the mind without the assistance of words, nor can the understanding seize them except by means of propositions. ... [I]mages ... [and p]urely abstract beings ... are only conceivable by the help of language". Rousseau, "Discourse on the Origin of Inequality", p. 67.

<sup>33</sup> Although Rousseau's *Essay on the Origin of Language* defines a theoretical science of language that opens the field of linguistics and systematises the concepts within it, Derrida writes that Rousseau also inaugurates the closure of concepts. See Derrida, *Margins of Philosophy*, pp. 139-146.

### *Epistemological Critique in Kant and Hegel*

freedom fling garlands of flowers over his socio-economic chains.<sup>34</sup> They lead, Rousseau laments, to indolence, luxury and an absence of virtue. The arts and sciences exacerbate the inequality of modern civilised society, divorce man from his natural liberty and infatuate him with slavery.<sup>35</sup> In this regard, Rousseau contrasts pride (*amour propre*), which is typical of eighteenth century society, with man's natural capacities for self-preservation and compassion.<sup>36</sup> These determine his pre-social self-love (*amour de soi*), where the virtue is to love oneself without the mediation of others, hence a natural liberty. Nevertheless, the mediation of man's being in respect of the arts and sciences and inequality—that is, recognition in a society that honours pride and valorises egoism—leads to man's alienation from himself.<sup>37</sup> The very society of production that Hobbes and Locke first acknowledge, which throws man into intersubjective relations and raises the question of his autonomy and desire to be recognised, also foists upon him alienated egoism, which enjoins the compromise of blind obedience to appearance. As a result of pride, to seem to be what one is not reigns over to be who one is.<sup>38</sup>

Rousseau is clear that he is not concerned with the reconciliation of savage man to his natural liberty.<sup>39</sup> Despite its vices, modern society is indicative of the collective maturity of a people, who are ready to shape their own laws rather than defer to tradition.<sup>40</sup> The problem of freedom is asked in respect of the civilised man as he is, so that he may reconstitute state power accordingly. Whilst savage man is endowed with the capacities for self-preservation and compassion that enable self-love, it is only through the capacity for reason, which is particular to a civilised language user, that he can be moral.<sup>41</sup> It is thanks to this potentially universal ability that Rousseau argues man is born free, yet under the conditions of pride and inequality his capacity to reason is stifled. As man does not live by the laws he makes himself, which would realise his autonomy, but through the appearance reciprocated between alienated egoists subject to pride, man's freedom is in chains.<sup>42</sup>

Rousseau's solution is for the community to jointly constitute juridical power,

<sup>34</sup> Rousseau, "Discourse on the Arts and Sciences", pp. 5-21.

<sup>35</sup> Rousseau, "Discourse on the Arts and Sciences", pp. 25-29.

<sup>36</sup> Rousseau, "Discourse on the Arts and Sciences", pp. 71-74.

<sup>37</sup> Rousseau, "Discourse on the Arts and Sciences", pp. 84-92.

<sup>38</sup> Rousseau, "Discourse on the Arts and Sciences", p. 95.

<sup>39</sup> Rousseau, "Discourse on the Arts and Sciences", pp. 49-51 and pp. 125-126.

<sup>40</sup> Rousseau, "The Social Contract", chs. 9-10.

<sup>41</sup> Rousseau, "Discourse on the Origin of Inequality", pp. 46-47.

<sup>42</sup> Rousseau, "The Social Contract", chs. 1-4.

## *Epistemological Critique in Kant and Hegel*

which protects every one's liberty and goods and simultaneously allows each man to be the author of the law.<sup>43</sup> Language and reason enable him to partake in the virtuous communal activity of the legislation of the *volonté générale*. It is a process of reciprocal dialogue, in which men recognise themselves in others and acknowledge the universality of their interests. At the same time, through obedience to the laws he makes himself, man realises his political liberty. He throws off his obedience to appearance and, as the master of himself, he is autonomous in his thought and action.<sup>44</sup> Man is mature, and no longer bifurcated by pride from his authentic autonomous being. The unmediated self-love of savage man, for whom liberty is the mere impulse to appetite—slavery, as Rousseau calls it—is transcended in the people's formation of the body politic. And, as civilised man, he is reconciled to himself insofar as political liberty enables the realisation of the capacity of reason through political liberation in the *volonté générale*. Rousseau's man moves beyond pride and into generally willed mutual recognition, which still allows particularity in the shape of autonomy that is akin to a socialised self-love. For the watchmaker's son who is proud in regard to what he is, in spite of his origins, and beside himself when one reminds him of it,<sup>45</sup> the linguistic nature of knowledge justifies the substantiation of autonomy through the recognition that is afforded by the juridical state. "Each of us puts his person and all his power in common under the supreme direction of the general will", Rousseau writes,

[which] takes [the name] of *Republic* or *body politic*; it is called by its members *State* when passive, *Sovereign* when active, and *Power* when compared with others like itself. Those who associated in it take collectively the name of *people*, and severally are called *citizens*, as sharing in the sovereign authority, and *subjects*, as being under the laws of the State.<sup>46</sup>

### **2.iii. Kant and the Question of Maturity**

After the insights of Hobbes and Locke into man's ability to realise objective experience in pursuit of political liberty, Rousseau's account of the social nature of language and the alienation of autonomous man inaugurates, through the constitution of the juridical state's *volonté générale*, the communal mediation of man's self-love *a propos* of his capacity for reason and need for political liberation.

<sup>43</sup> Rousseau, "The Social Contract", chs. 6-7.

<sup>44</sup> Rousseau, "The Social Contract", ch. 8.

<sup>45</sup> Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, § 100, p. 63.

<sup>46</sup> Rousseau, "The Social Contract", pp. 192-193.

## *Epistemological Critique in Kant and Hegel*

Nonetheless, the worry with Rousseau's dream of a transparent society, which is based on the philosopher's epistemological and political critique, is that the self-love he reifies as autonomy to escape pride requires a politics to process recognition which tempts man into the role of overseer and comrade.<sup>47</sup> In intimation of a rousseauian nightmare, Kant puts a break on the eighteenth century's domination by *coeur* over *la tête*.<sup>48</sup> After 1781, he endeavours philosophically *à la* Rousseau on behalf of humanity and autonomy,<sup>49</sup> which necessitates critical philosophy's reformulation of epistemological critique to nullify the skepticism of empirical metaphysicists such as Locke, and the dogmatism of christian ontology.

To overcome philosophy's pedantic university practice and realise its rousseauian potential to deliver critique that is based on man's autonomy,<sup>50</sup> Kant reduces philosophy to four questions: what can I know?; what ought I to do?; what may I hope for?; and what is man?.<sup>51</sup> With respect to what may I hope for?, critical philosophy does not proffer knowledge of things beyond human experience.<sup>52</sup> Similarly, what is man? is a subsidiary of the second question rather than the basis of normative justice as for Hobbes and Locke, who make a pernicious error in their moral ground of man's heteronomous desire.<sup>53</sup> In response to the first two questions, Kant's rousseauian reflection in *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View* is to say that "man is destined by his reason to live in a society of people, and ... to apply himself to a moral purpose".<sup>54</sup> Thus, for the creator of time,<sup>55</sup> Kant, who is a whole solar system at once,<sup>56</sup> what can I know? demands an objective knowledge of the things in the world that is suited to, and derived from, man's experience of his authentic being of autonomy. Further, this is also the key to what ought I to do?, because autonomy translates into the idea of freedom that is

<sup>47</sup> Foucault, "The Eye of Power", p. 152.

<sup>48</sup> Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, § 95, p. 59. Although, as Roger Chartier argues, it is important to avoid an "oversimplification of any analysis of the Revolution that plays the game of retrospective dovetailing to inscribe 1793 in 1789, ... terrorist violence in the theory of the general will". Chartier, "The Chimera of the Origin", p. 177.

<sup>49</sup> Knippenberg, "The Politics of Kant's Philosophy", p. 156.

<sup>50</sup> Beck, *Early German Philosophy*, p. 426.

<sup>51</sup> Williams, *Kant's Political Philosophy*, p. 223.

<sup>52</sup> Kant argues that God cannot be the *ratio determinans antecedenter* of things, although a *ratio cognoscendi* of God's existence is possible as a derivative concept and crucial, along with the idea of immortality, to a moral teleology. Kant, "Critique of Practical Reason", pp. 214-249.

<sup>53</sup> Kant, "Introduction to *The Metaphysics of Morals*", pp. 44-45 and pp. 40-41.

<sup>54</sup> Quoted in Williams, *Kant's Political Philosophy*, p. 223.

<sup>55</sup> Merleau-Ponty, cited in Waxman, *Kant's Model of the Mind*, p. 27, f. 14.

<sup>56</sup> Abbott, "Memoir of Kant", p. xiii.

## *Epistemological Critique in Kant and Hegel*

affirmed by *Moralität*.<sup>57</sup> Firstly, though, it is fruitful to consider the German intellectual climate of the eighteenth century, especially the *Pantheismusstreit* and the *Sturm und Drang*, which challenge man's capacity for, and ability to achieve, maturity, and Moses Mendelssohn, whose clarification of *Aufklärung* in opposition to these challenges influences Kant, who eventually establishes how to think and act freely with a metaphysics of experience and morals.

Between Martin Luther's publication of the *Disputation against Scholastic Theology* in 1517 and Friedrich II's coronation in 1740, the German speaking regions of Europe suffer the Thirty Years' War, absolutist principalities, bureaucratic rule and economic stagnation.<sup>58</sup> Among the intelligentsia, critical thought and political commitment are as scarce as a public culture of debate and informed opinion.<sup>59</sup> Philosophers are overly professorial and parochial in comparison to their foreign counterparts, and the intellectual climate lags behind that of England and France.<sup>60</sup> But scientific humanism slowly gains in popularity as *Hochdeutsch* replaces Latin and writers start to publish in the vernacular.<sup>61</sup> In the universities, scientific humanism aids the secularisation of aristotelianism away from its monopolisation by the christian ontology of the orthodox protestants or pietists.<sup>62</sup> Further, even though Friedrich II's pretensions to be a philosopher-king are questionable,<sup>63</sup> he is a politically enlightened, francophile *kaiser* who manages to modernise Prussia,<sup>64</sup> so that by the late eighteenth century Prussia—if not Berlin<sup>65</sup>—is the home of the *Aufklärung*.<sup>66</sup> Amidst all this, the relation between philosophy and religion comes to

<sup>57</sup> In my analysis of what ought I to do?, I focus on the *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* and the *Critique of Practical Reason*. The former classifies and the latter justifies the supreme principle of *Moralität*, autonomy, whereas the *Metaphysics of Morals* applies it. Allison calls this Kant's mature doctrine, rather than his semi-critical doctrine of the *Critique of Pure Reason*. Further, although Mary Gregor argues it is unfortunate that the *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, and not the *Metaphysics of Morals*, is taken as Kant's definitive position on *Moralität*, I follow Beck who claims that the *Metaphysics of Morals* is the least significant of Kant's works on *Moralität*. Allison, *Kant's theory of freedom*, pp. 66-67; Gregor, "Translator's Introduction", pp. 1-6; Beck, "Introduction", pp. 16-17.

<sup>58</sup> Pascal, *The German Sturm und Drang*, p. 42.

<sup>59</sup> Engell, *The Creative Imagination*, pp. 91-101.

<sup>60</sup> Reiss, "Introduction", pp. 6-8.

<sup>61</sup> Wolff, *Die Weltanschauung der deutschen Aufklärung*, pp. 66-68.

<sup>62</sup> Randall, *The Career of Philosophy*, pp. 50-55.

<sup>63</sup> Denis Diderot, *Pages inédites contre un tyran*, cited in Gay, *The Enlightenment, Volume 2*, p. 487.

<sup>64</sup> Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, p. 437. Friedrich II's *Codex Fridericianus* (1747) establishes a Prussian judiciary, which upholds religious diversity and abolishes the use of torture, whilst his *Allgemeines preussisches Landrecht* (1796) combines natural law with German and Roman law.

<sup>65</sup> Though, as Peter Gay and others argue, a more commercially driven *Aufklärung* occurs beyond Prussia, too, in Frankfurt-am-Main, Halle, Hanover, Hamburg, Leipzig and Dresden. See Gay, *The Enlightenment, Volume 2*, pp. 47-72; Randall, *The Career of Philosophy*; Garland, "Germany".

<sup>66</sup> Brunschwig, *Enlightenment and Romanticism*, p. 1.



## *Epistemological Critique in Kant and Hegel*

the fore in the *Pantheismusstreit*, in which man as a subject of knowledge is rejected, as does the question of an authentic German culture under the challenge of the *Stürmer und Dränger*, who repudiate the use of reason to articulate justice.

The English, Scottish and French dilemma over the appropriate balance between man and God characterises the *Pantheismusstreit*, which centres on the mutually exclusive belief of *aufklärers* and pietists in reason or faith as the basis for objective experience. After Leibniz's harmonisation of reason with faith, Christian Wolff develops a secular morality that commands allegiance on the basis of an ontology of formal rather than christian logic.<sup>67</sup> Under pressure from the pietists, Friedrich I expels Wolff from his post at the rationalist, anti-aristotelian Halle Universität.<sup>68</sup> After sporadic flourishes between 1650 and 1730, faculties of philosophy are subject to the faculties of theology which are headed by the pietists, who are supported by Friedrich I.<sup>69</sup> However, Wolff is re-instated upon the succession of Friedrich II to the Prussian throne, which rekindles the main philosophical debate about whether the formal, structural elements of thought, on which the *Aufklärung* is predicated, might be grounded in man's experience of the world.<sup>70</sup> In their emphasis on the limitations of human understanding, the pietists maintain that the principles of sufficient reason cannot be deduced from formal logic, which they demarcate from christian ontology in the interests of a return to the scriptures for questions about knowledge.<sup>71</sup> But by the 1780s a strong anti-pietist opposition develops, which is spurred on by the *Berlinisches Journal für Aufklärung* and other publications where *aufklärers* advocate man as the condition of possibility for knowledge.<sup>72</sup>

Parallel to the philosophical dispute between reason and faith, a politico-cultural reaction to the *Aufklärung* arises from the *Stürmer und Dränger*. In *das Land der Dichter und Denker*, the *Pantheismusstreit* seems far removed from the concerns of many people.<sup>73</sup> The dispute over a pious versus abstract morality provides fertile soil for a revolt against both the *Aufklärung's* faith in reason as a basis for justice and its cultural enthrallment with antiquity,<sup>74</sup> which are perceived as a threat to cultural originality and the unique propensity of the German language to produce

<sup>67</sup> Randall, *The Career of Philosophy*, p. 56; Zammito, *The Genesis of Kant's Critique of Judgement*, pp. 17-18.

<sup>68</sup> Zammito, *The Genesis of Kant's Critique of Judgement*, p. 11.

<sup>69</sup> Kühn, "The German Aufklärung and British Philosophy", pp. 309-311.

<sup>70</sup> Randall, *The Career of Philosophy*, pp. 57-58.

<sup>71</sup> Zammito, *The Genesis of Kant's Critique of Judgement*, pp. 19-22.

<sup>72</sup> Brunschwig, *Enlightenment and Romanticism*, pp. 88-89.

<sup>73</sup> Pascal, *The German Sturm und Drang*, p. xiv.

<sup>74</sup> Brunschwig, *Enlightenment and Romanticism*, pp. 89-90.

## *Epistemological Critique in Kant and Hegel*

literary geniuses.<sup>75</sup> *Stürmer und Dränger* oppose the *aufklärers* on several fronts—truth and culture as an end versus truth as a means to self-interest and profit;<sup>76</sup> genius and sensuous consciousness versus reason;<sup>77</sup> and an idyllic, mediæval sense of *Gemeinschaft* versus modern *Gesellschaft*<sup>78</sup>—and through the two Johanns, Herder and Goethe, and the *Frankfurter Gelehrte Anzeigen* journal the *Sturm und Drang*'s popularity coincides with the pietists' success between the 1750s and the 1770s.<sup>79</sup> An important reason why it finally loses its momentum is the counter-*Sturm und Drang* stance of Mendelssohn in the 1780s, whose urban cosmopolitanism, fluency in English and introduction of David Hume's philosophy to Berlin prepare the ground for Kant.<sup>80</sup> In addition, Mendelssohn's conception of *Aufklärung* is further proof that the theme of epistemological critique in the name of autonomy and recognition, which enamours Kant and animates Hegel, depends on Rousseau's field of humanist discursivity.

In September 1784, three months prior to the publication of Kant's essay on the same topic, Mendelssohn's essay, "Über die Frage: was heißt aufklären?", appears in the *Berlinische Monatschrift*. He begins with a clarification of the three key concepts of *Bildung*, *Kultur* and *Aufklärung*. Accordingly, "civilisation, culture and enlightenment transform existence and are the product of man's diligence and endeavour to improve his social condition".<sup>81</sup> In particular, Mendelssohn suggests that culture is radically altered by modern society, and to moderate man's efforts and ensure he does not get lost within it he proposes the yardstick of *die Bestimmung des Menschen*, man's determined purpose,<sup>82</sup> which is not unlike a natural *volonté générale*.<sup>83</sup> What it amounts to for Mendelssohn is *Aufklärung* itself,

<sup>75</sup> Zammito, *The Genesis of Kant's Critique of Judgement*, pp. 13-14.

<sup>76</sup> Wolff, *Die Weltanschauung der deutschen Aufklärung*, pp. 251-255.

<sup>77</sup> Garland, "Germany", p. 102; Pascal, *The German Sturm und Drang*, pp. xv-xvi.

<sup>78</sup> Pascal, *The German Sturm und Drang*, pp. 48-50.

<sup>79</sup> Brunschwig, *Enlightenment and Romanticism*, pp. 90-95.

<sup>80</sup> Kühn, "The German Aufklärung and British Philosophy", pp. 316-320. This is not to suggest that Kant is influenced by Mendelssohn's essay. Indeed, on the day he finishes his own essay on enlightenment, Kant says that "I read today ... [of] Mendelssohn's answer to the same question ... . I have not yet seen this journal, otherwise I should have held back the above reflections. I let them stand only as a means of finding out by comparison how far the thoughts of two individuals may coincide by chance". Kant, "An Answer to the Question: 'What is Enlightenment?'" , p. 60, note.

<sup>81</sup> "Bildung, Kultur und Aufklärung sind Modifikationen des geselligen Lebens; Wirkungen des Fleißes und der Bemühungen der Menschen ihren geselligen Zustand zu verbessern". Mendelssohn, "Über die Frage: was heißt aufklären?", p. 115.

<sup>82</sup> Mendelssohn, "Über die Frage: was heißt aufklären?", pp. 115-116.

<sup>83</sup> On the prevalence and meaning of *die Bestimmung des Menschen* in seventeenth and eighteenth century German philosophy, see Grimm and Grimm, *Deutsches Wörterbuch, Band I*, pp. 1678-1679.

## *Epistemological Critique in Kant and Hegel*

which is related to culture as theory is to practice, and philosophy to morality.<sup>84</sup> And, just as language is the best indicator of a people's civilisation, their level of culture is indicative of their *Aufklärung*. Nevertheless, man does not need culture — he is, *à la* Rousseau's self-love, at ease with himself — but, contra the pietists and the *Stürmer und Dränger*, he does need *Aufklärung*.<sup>85</sup>

On Mendelssohn's reckoning, *Aufklärung* is the intermediary of culture, which is subject to the vicissitudes of modern society. These include a disturbance of its ranks and the status of men within it, and only a deference to the progress of enlightenment (*Menschenaufklärung*) by men who know and honour their social position (*Bürgeraufklärung*) can alleviate it. Should they seek to deny their determined purpose and challenge the *Aufklärung's* mediation of culture, then egoism, atheism and anarchy would replace enlightenment, and lavishness, effeteness, superstition and slavery would engulf culture.<sup>86</sup> At the same time, it would be necessary for the *aufklärer*, who is in constant touch with the determined purpose, to fail to authorise the legislation necessary to prevent this in the first place. For Mendelssohn, the role of *Aufklärung* is the safe delivery of modern culture, and together they give birth to and enable one to gauge a nation's level of civilisation. Men who know their station (*Bürgeraufklärung*) and perform their duty (*Menschenaufklärung*) are the core ingredients of an enlightened culture and a civilised nation, and only an excess of pride in its new found spiritual and material prosperity can negate the inevitable process of *Aufklärung*.<sup>87</sup>

### **2.iv. *Aufklärung* and the Metaphysics of Objective Experience**

Königsberg *Universität*, where Kant is a *Privatdozent* in logic, ethics, jurisprudence, geography and anthropology from 1755 up to his appointment as a professor of logic and metaphysics in 1770, is no exception to the rule of christian ontology in German universities since the thirteenth century.<sup>88</sup> Nonetheless, Kant's frequent visits to Berlin ensure that he is a committed *aufklärer*, and upon the deaths of Lessing (1780) and Mendelssohn (1786) he assumes the responsibility for *Aufklärung*. There is an added urgency to Kant's task, too. Between 1781 and 1790,

<sup>84</sup> Mendelssohn, "Über die Frage: was heißt aufklären?", p. 116. I translate *Sittlichkeit* as morality rather than ethical life because, until Hegel demarcates them, in Kant's day and in his philosophy *Sittlichkeit* is synonymous with *Moralität*. Inwood, "Hegel and His Language", pp. 12-13.

<sup>85</sup> Mendelssohn, "Über die Frage: was heißt aufklären?", p. 116.

<sup>86</sup> Mendelssohn, "Über die Frage: was heißt aufklären?", pp. 117-118.

<sup>87</sup> Mendelssohn, "Über die Frage: was heißt aufklären?", pp. 118-119.

<sup>88</sup> Beck, *Early German Philosophy*, pp. 78-179.

## *Epistemological Critique in Kant and Hegel*

the cause of the pietists and *Stürmer und Dränger* is bolstered by the support of Friedrich Wilhelm III, the conservative son of Friedrich II, who dies in 1786.<sup>89</sup> The pietists' hold on objective experience and the *Stürmer und Dränger's* desire to rescue civilisation from an overly abstract *Aufklärung*, which they say causes rather than mitigates a decadent culture, define Kant's philosophical task: shift the ground of an objective experience of things from christian ontology's dogmatism to man; and, vis-à-vis Locke's and Hume's skepticism, locate the seat of knowledge in man's reason rather than his perception. Once this is done, Kant's epistemological critique can guarantee *Aufklärung* and realise man's autonomy through *Moralität*. But what is kantian *Aufklärung* and the critical thought it establishes?

Kant is not a philosopher to beat about the bush. *Aufklärung*, he proclaims, "*ist der Ausgang des Menschen aus seiner selbst verschuldeten Unmündigkeit*".<sup>90</sup>

*Enlightenment is man's emergence from his self-incurred immaturity. Immaturity is the inability to use one's own understanding without the guidance of another. This immaturity is self-incurred if its cause is not lack of understanding, but lack of resolution and courage to use it without the guidance of another. The motto of the enlightenment is therefore: Sapere aude! Have courage to use your own understanding!*<sup>91</sup>

For Kant, the scarce use of understanding results from laziness and cowardice. They leave the door open for guardians – the pietists, for example – who, with their dogmas that anchor immaturity, step in and supervise life. As a result, self-incurred immaturity is, somewhat like rousseauian pride that causes slavery, like a second nature to man. Immaturity (*Unmündigkeit*) denotes how, in the face of what to think and how to act, man is unreasonable (*Unvernünftig*), unreckoning (*Unzurechnungsfähig*), helpless (*Hilflosigkeit*) and mentally dependent (*geistige Unselbstständigkeit*).<sup>92</sup> In Beck's apt term, *Unmündigkeit* is man's tutelage in thought and action.<sup>93</sup> On his own, Kant argues, man is unlikely to find the exit to maturity,<sup>94</sup> for which he requires the "most innocuous freedom of all – freedom to make *public use* of one's reason in all matters".<sup>95</sup> In this respect, Kant speaks of the citizen's right and duty to make unconstrained use of his reason in learned circles, whereas in his

<sup>89</sup> Zammito, *The Genesis of Kant's Critique of Judgement*, pp. 8-10; Reiss, "Introduction", pp. 1-3.

<sup>90</sup> Kant, "Beantwortung der Frage: Was ist Aufklärung?", p. 35.

<sup>91</sup> Kant, "An Answer to the Question: 'What is Enlightenment?'" , p. 54.

<sup>92</sup> On interpretations of *Unmündigkeit* from Luther to Goethe, see Grimm and Grimm, *Deutsches Wörterbuch, Band XI*, pp. 1192-1195.

<sup>93</sup> Kant, "What is Enlightenment?", p. 286.

<sup>94</sup> Kant, "An Answer to the Question: 'What is Enlightenment?'" , pp. 54-55.

<sup>95</sup> Kant, "An Answer to the Question: 'What is Enlightenment?'" , p. 55.

## *Epistemological Critique in Kant and Hegel*

private use of reason the same citizen might reasonably suffer restrictions attendant upon the duties and obligations of his civilian office.<sup>96</sup> As for Mendelssohn, with his *Bürgeraufklärung* and *Menschenaufklärung*, Kant's citizen's private and public use of reason have their place, and like Rousseau, who speaks of man's political liberty in the context of a *volonté générale*, the priority lies with the latter rather than the former.

In addition, man's *humanitas*—to recall Heidegger—of a capacity for reason, which helps Rousseau's subject to transform his self-love through recognition into autonomy, is re-iterated by Kant, for whom to renounce enlightenment for oneself or future generations is to violate the sacred rights of mankind.<sup>97</sup> A balance must be struck, therefore, between a people's intellectual freedom that carries *Aufklärung* forward, and civil freedom or autonomy which often sets up barriers to it. With Kant, as for Mendelssohn, *Aufklärung* is the go-between of culture, which is delivered through a head of state who, re-assured by the *aufklärers*, is confident in his own authority and the ability of reason to inculcate maturity without the threat of revolution.<sup>98</sup> An enlightened king, Kant says, can tell his subjects what no republic would dare say to its citizens: "Argue as much as you like and about whatever you like, but obey!", for a *kaiser* like Friedrich Wilhelm II can rest assured that:

a lesser degree of civil freedom gives intellectual freedom enough room to expand to its fullest extent. Thus once the germ on which nature has lavished most care—man's inclination and duty to *think freely*—has developed within this hard shell, it gradually reacts upon the mentality of the people, who thus gradually become increasingly able to *act freely*.<sup>99</sup>

Kantian *Aufklärung* is a carefully orchestrated process of epistemological and political critique. On the basis of man's authentic being, critique mediates between the autonomy that *Aufklärung* demands, and the public order that sustains intellectual freedom and inculcates civil freedom. *Aufklärung* requires a metaphysics of experience to teach man how to think freely, and subsequently a metaphysics of morals to secure the conditions for man to act freely. These ideal answers to what can I know? and what ought I to do? define the twin axes of kantian critical thought.

<sup>96</sup> Kant, "Beantwortung der Frage: Was ist Aufklärung?", pp. 36-38.

<sup>97</sup> Kant, "An Answer to the Question: 'What is Enlightenment?'" , p. 58. Cf. Rousseau, "The Social Contract", p. 186.

<sup>98</sup> Kant, "An Answer to the Question: 'What is Enlightenment?'" , p. 55.

<sup>99</sup> Kant, "An Answer to the Question: 'What is Enlightenment?'" , p. 59.

## *Epistemological Critique in Kant and Hegel*

With regard to the first question, Beck argues that Kant is haunted by the paradox of the logical incompatibility between the objective and subjective conditions of scientific knowledge.<sup>100</sup> How, that is, can man produce scientific knowledge of both things and himself and at the same time be the origin and agent of this objective experience? In many ways, the slow but progressive development of Kant's *œuvre* reflects this dilemma,<sup>101</sup> especially Kant's eventful relationship to what he calls his mistress, metaphysics,<sup>102</sup> in respect of which he shifts from an infatuation with rationalism (1746-1759) to a scepticism about it as a viable epistemology (1760-1766);<sup>103</sup> hereafter, Kant embraces a modest ontology for metaphysics (1766-1772) before, after a temporary separation from his mistress (1772-1780),<sup>104</sup> he is reconciled with her on his terms of the synthetic *a priori* and a critical philosophy focused on *Grundlegung* rather than *Erweiterung*.<sup>105</sup>

As I argued in the previous section, Kant's metaphysics is concerned with the threat the pietists' christian ontology poses for *Aufklärung*. They treat time and space as independent variables and apprehend a thing-in-itself that conforms to God's order of the world, such that man's objective experience is defined by a dogmatic relation between words and things of transcendental realism.<sup>106</sup> What then is wrong with empirical metaphysics, in which man's knowledge of things is characterised by a skeptical relation of empirical realism?

If Descartes sets the wheels in motion,<sup>107</sup> Locke extricates metaphysics from the grips of christian ontology.<sup>108</sup> His *esprit philosophique* is no longer concerned with christian ontology's fundamental objects,<sup>109</sup> the soul, the cosmos and God,<sup>110</sup> but with an objective experience of a thing-in-itself which is known to the extent that, subsequent to his perception of it, man makes sense of a thing through rational

<sup>100</sup> Beck, "Introduction", pp. 1-2.

<sup>101</sup> Nelson, *Progress and Regress, Volume I*, p. 101.

<sup>102</sup> Kant, *Dreams of a Spirit-Seer, Illustrated by Dreams of Metaphysics*, cited in Beck, *Early German Philosophy*, p. 445.

<sup>103</sup> Nelson, *Progress and Regress, Volume I*, pp. 93-98.

<sup>104</sup> Beiser, "Kant's Intellectual Development: 1746-1781".

<sup>105</sup> Nelson, *Progress and Regress, Volume I*, p. 104. On the evolution of Kant's philosophy, see Beck, *Early German Philosophy*, pp. 430-467; Guyer, "Introduction", pp. 5-11; Williams, *Kant's Political Philosophy*, pp. 18-28.

<sup>106</sup> Allison, *Kant's Transcendental Idealism*, pp. 15-16; Ameriks, "The critique of metaphysics", p. 254.

<sup>107</sup> Hampson, *The Enlightenment*, pp. 16-29.

<sup>108</sup> d'Alembert, *Preliminary Discourse to the Encyclopaedia of Diderot*, p. 62.

<sup>109</sup> Berlin, *The Age of Enlightenment*, pp. 11-14.

<sup>110</sup> Belaval, "Le conte philosophique", p. 310.

## *Epistemological Critique in Kant and Hegel*

principles.<sup>111</sup> From Kant's perspective, empirical metaphysics is dogged by the antinomies. Every time reason goes beyond experience and, *a propos* of perception that is subjective, claims to have a knowledge of a thing-in-itself, it falls into unavoidable contradiction.<sup>112</sup> Whilst christian ontology's *Grundlegung* in faith suffers an inevitable decline in the age of reason, the attempt by empirical metaphysics to put the queen of the sciences, philosophy,<sup>113</sup> onto a truly scientific path to *Erweiterung* is successful neither philosophically, insofar as objective experience is dependent on perception, nor politically, because classical liberal man acts out of interest rather than duty. What is needed to carry *Aufklärung* forward, Kant suggests, is an epistemological critique of the capacity for reason itself and all that it tries to establish,<sup>114</sup> and only a critical philosophy of *Grundlegung* can discern:

whether the task [of inquiring into the hidden qualities of things] be within the limits of our knowledge, and in stating its relations to conceptions derived from experience; for these must always be the foundation of all our judgements. To this extent metaphysics is the science of the boundaries of human reason.<sup>115</sup>

An epistemological critique of the capacities of reason is the kantian key to autonomous man's objective experience of a thing, which he must know prior to his perception of it. Also, Kant says that it must be possible to derive more predicates about the thing than can be obtained from an analysis of the concept of it. Knowledge of a thing has to be non-empirical and extra-conceptual, or determined by an *a priori* and synthetic relation. With Kant, the paradox between knower and known becomes how is it "possible to extend one's knowledge beyond a given concept, independently of any experience of the object thought through that concept"?<sup>116</sup> For his answer, he turns neither to faith nor perception but reason,<sup>117</sup> which enjoys the "prerogative of being the ultimate touchstone of truth".<sup>118</sup> Kant's task is to vindicate reason, which in its negative moment disciplines metaphysics into a science that provides principles which guide man in the already to hand

<sup>111</sup> Terré, "Philosophie des Lumières et Révolution", p. 25.

<sup>112</sup> Williams, *Kant's Political Philosophy*, pp. 52-53; Nelson, *Progress and Regress, Volume I*, pp. 21-51.

<sup>113</sup> Hutchings, *Kant, Critique and Politics*, pp. 12-13.

<sup>114</sup> Kant, "Preface to *The Metaphysics of Morals*", p. 36.

<sup>115</sup> Kant, *Dreams of a Spirit-Seer, Illustrated by Dreams of Metaphysics*, quoted in Beck, *Early German Philosophy*, p. 445.

<sup>116</sup> Allison, *Kant's Transcendental Idealism*, p. 78.

<sup>117</sup> Nelson, *Progress and Regress, Volume I*, pp. 87-92.

<sup>118</sup> Kant, "What is Orientation in Thinking?", p. 305.

## *Epistemological Critique in Kant and Hegel*

ways of thought and action.<sup>119</sup> Epistemological vindication for *Aufklärung*, therefore, and Kant's synthetic *a priori* objective experience of things requires nothing less than the transformation of metaphysics, as he in fact realises.

Hitherto it has been assumed that all our knowledge must conform to objects. But all attempts to extend our knowledge of objects by establishing something in regard to them *a priori*, by means of concepts, have, on this assumption, ended in failure. We must therefore make trial whether we may not have more success in the tasks of metaphysics, if we suppose that objects must conform to our knowledge.<sup>120</sup>

Kant's anthropocentric epistemological critique—his revolutionary philosophical thesis<sup>121</sup>—presupposes that the generically different faculties of intuition, understanding and reason satisfy the epistemic conditions necessary for objective experience. According to Kant, man's intuition and understanding constitute form, the unifying structure of experience. Intuition and understanding also entertain a thing, which appears in the form of each faculty, whilst reason's form is the structure of thought that is devoid of a thing. Initially, man knows a thing through his perception and sensory experience of it. The faculty of intuition's outer and inner pure or *a priori* forms of space and time, which are the twin pillars of Kant's epistemological critique, allow man to perceive things.<sup>122</sup> Secondly, the thing becomes an object of the pure but general concepts of thought in the faculty of understanding. Here, the logical use of reason, the science of mathematics, manipulates the concepts of pure intuition via thinking.<sup>123</sup> Thirdly, in the pure forms of the structures of thought, which are situated in the faculty of reason, the (science of the) logical use of reason orders and subordinates pure concepts.<sup>124</sup>

The translation of man's intuition of a thing into knowledge about it is completed by the transcendental unity of apperception. As a pure concept that acts as Kant's condition for the structure of thought,<sup>125</sup> the transcendental unity of apperception is the spontaneous activity of thinking that is generated by reason.<sup>126</sup> It is self-consciousness *qua* pure thought in the faculty of reason, and to ensure that man also experiences himself in his daily existence Kant introduces empirical self-

<sup>119</sup> O'Neill, "Vindicating reason", p. 291.

<sup>120</sup> Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, quoted in Allison, *Kant's Transcendental Idealism*, p. 28.

<sup>121</sup> Allison, *Kant's Transcendental Idealism*, p. 29.

<sup>122</sup> Parsons, "The Transcendental Aesthetic".

<sup>123</sup> Beck, *Early German Philosophy*, pp. 458-460.

<sup>124</sup> Kant, "Preface to the *Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysic of Morals*", pp. 1-2.

<sup>125</sup> Hatfield, "Empirical, rational, and transcendental psychology", p. 204.

<sup>126</sup> Wartenberg, "Reason and the practice of science", p. 229.



## *Epistemological Critique in Kant and Hegel*

consciousness into the faculty of understanding.<sup>127</sup> Man intuits himself, so to speak, and apperception unifies his outer intuitions in thought, which makes them into subjective things of the phenomenal world or humanly conditioned empirical knowledge.<sup>128</sup> The transcendental 'I' in kantian man has the power of apperception that synthesises his intuitions.<sup>129</sup> As a result, a thing appears to him as a phenomenon only, a thing-for-itself, to which man's knowledge must confine itself. For Kant, a thing does not appear in terms of its noumenal or in-itself quality, which man can reason upon but not actually know.<sup>130</sup>

In effect, Kant's critique of reason's limits extends a copernican mathematical method into the empirical sciences of nature and philosophy. His metaphysics of objective experience, commonly known as transcendental idealism,<sup>131</sup> drives a wedge between the conditions that effect man's knowledge of a thing-for-itself and the extra-scientific conditions required for a knowledge of a thing-in-itself.<sup>132</sup> Armed with the synthetic *a priori*, Kant successfully challenges the transcendental realism and dogmatic objectivity of the pietists' christian ontology. The sceptic's antinomies are resolved, too. Man's empirical, phenomenal knowledge leaves a thing as it is in-itself within a realm of unknown causal determinism to which everything is subject. Kant's copernican revolution not only re-defines objective experience through a specification of the conditions necessary for man's knowledge of things and human experience in the world, but a metaphysics of experience is the saviour of epistemological critique that is grounded in man's autonomy and central to *Aufklärung*.

<sup>127</sup> Nelson, *Progress and Regress, Volume I*, pp. 204-205; Brook, *Kant and the Mind*, p. 11.

<sup>128</sup> An intuition can only be lent meaning if man is aware of the intuition as his own. It must of necessity be possible (though not necessarily actual) for man to reflectively attach 'I think' to his intuition. This is the 'I' of apperception. But man's intuition of a thing, which is initially as a single complex thought, must be grasped as a unity, which requires a single thinking subject. This is the task of the kantian 'I', the unity of consciousness, which is evident in every act of thought. As the 'I' of apperception and the 'I' of thought are indissolubly one, they signify a logically simple subject, man. They are contained together in the concept of thought, and the transcendental unity of apperception is hence an analytic proposition about man *qua* transcendental subject. Allison, *Kant's Transcendental Idealism*, pp. 258-278 and pp. 137-139.

<sup>129</sup> Brook, *Kant and the Mind*, pp. 90-91.

<sup>130</sup> Guyer, "Introduction", pp. 12-16.

<sup>131</sup> Allison writes that "Kant's idealism is 'formal' in the sense that it is a theory about the nature and scope of the *conditions* under which objects can be experienced or known by the human mind. This is to be contrasted with idealisms of the Cartesian or Berkeleyan sort, which are first and foremost theories about the *contents* of consciousness ... . Again, this idealism is 'critical' because it is rounded in a reflection on the conditions and limits of human knowledge, and not on the contents of consciousness or the nature of *an sich* reality". Allison, *Kant's Transcendental Idealism*, pp. 25-26.

<sup>132</sup> Allison, *Kant's Transcendental Idealism*, p. 66.

**2.v. Autonomy and *Moralität***

Because he thinks freely through objective experience that is rendered by the faculty of understanding, a transcendental idealist with resolution and courage is able to partake in *Aufklärung*. Kant's epistemological critique, which is grounded in the apperceptive capacities of the transcendental subject, secures man his right to intellectual freedom. But what of the civil freedom that is crucial to *Aufklärung*? What ought I to do to be mature, such that the head of state need have no fear of actions which flow from (my) autonomy? In answer, Kant proposes that man's reason, which teaches him how to think freely via a metaphysics of experience that is regulated by his understanding, can also show man how to act freely within the confines of the laws he makes himself. He says that a practical philosophy of moral wisdom can elucidate *Moralität's* compatibility with autonomy,<sup>133</sup> and although it grounds justice in man's *Wille* rather than God's Kant's metaphysics of morals establishes a universal *Moralität à la* christian ontology, whilst it carries Rousseau's dream of liberty as obedience to a law man prescribes to himself forward.

Kant believes that reason is bestowed on man as a practical faculty to help him act freely via the fundamentally good *Wille*.<sup>134</sup> When man's volition is motivated by the maxims of the *Wille*, which is a formal synthetic *a priori* proposition, duty as necessity is performed and the ideal legality of *Moralität* is realised.<sup>135</sup> Kant argues that man's actions should be susceptible to universal laws because all other men possess the capacity of *Wille*, too.<sup>136</sup> This potential synonymy of action gives rise to the categorical imperative, where man's duty when he acts freely is to bear others in mind as an end and never to use them as a means.<sup>137</sup> Each man is an end in himself in virtue of his *Wille*, the basis of human dignity,<sup>138</sup> which gives every man the capacity of *autos nomos*, or the self-legislation of universal laws that constitute *Moralität*: "AUTONOMY OF WILL IS THAT QUALITY OF WILL BY WHICH A WILL (independently of any object willed) IS A LAW TO ITSELF".<sup>139</sup>

<sup>133</sup> Kant, "Introduction to *The Metaphysics of Morals*", pp. 43-45.

<sup>134</sup> Kant, "Groundwork of the Metaphysic of Ethics", pp. 4-12.

<sup>135</sup> Kant, "Groundwork of the Metaphysic of Ethics", p. 13. When man's maxims relate to external actions and conform to law, they are juridical and the action has legality, and when in relation to external actions man's maxims conform to *Moralität*, they are ethical and the action is morality. Kant, "Introduction to *The Metaphysics of Morals*", p. 42.

<sup>136</sup> Kant, "Groundwork of the Metaphysic of Ethics", p. 25.

<sup>137</sup> Kant, "Groundwork of the Metaphysic of Ethics", pp. 27-42.

<sup>138</sup> Kant, "Groundwork of the Metaphysic of Ethics", pp. 49-50.

<sup>139</sup> Kant, "Groundwork of the Metaphysic of Ethics", p. 55.

## *Epistemological Critique in Kant and Hegel*

But a difficulty for Kant is the relationship between ought and is, duty and desire. Is it possible for man to be a subject of *Moralität* and to act freely in the empirical world? In other words, Kant must show how man's autonomy constitutes the Königsberg version of the *volonté générale* and, simultaneously, how man is free within its borders, which requires the introduction of the idea of freedom that describes the non-experiential aspect of *Moralität*.<sup>140</sup> Kant considers the *Wille* as a kind of causality that can be attributed to men with the capacity of reason. The idea of freedom is the property of this causality, and it enables the *Wille* to originate events independently of the empirical world.<sup>141</sup> Kant's idea of freedom thus entails *Wille* and *Willkür*,<sup>142</sup> and apart from its constitution of *Moralität* *Wille* is also the basis of man's autonomy in the shape of the *Willkür*, or man's ability to act freely.<sup>143</sup> Somewhat akin to the 'I' of thought and the 'I' of apperception as the conditions behind Kant's metaphysics of objective experience, kantian moral man has the capacity of reason, *Wille*, which is present in all men as the legislative will and makes them the source of *Moralität*, as well as the capacity for choice, *Willkür*, or the executive will that in its ideal execution allows man to choose and act freely in accordance with the idea of freedom. *Wille* is the negative concept of freedom and *Willkür* the positive—as Allison describes them, the capacity of autonomy or moral agency, and spontaneous subjectivity or rational agency.<sup>144</sup> Together, they constitute *Moralität*, in which duty and desire are compatible.

Through the mediations of the *Willkür*, which relates man back to his *Wille* every time he acts, spontaneous subjectivity is a reflexive task of self-discipline,<sup>145</sup> an *arbitrium liberum*, where "a simple desire [is] subjected to some degree of rational control".<sup>146</sup> Nonetheless, Kant worries that while it is possible to demonstrate in theory how duty and desire coincide, it may not be so easy in practice. To prove *Moralität's* reality and objective necessity to man in his spontaneous subjectivity requires an escape from this labyrinth of the idea of freedom, and Kant wonders:

<sup>140</sup> Schneewind, "Autonomy, obligation and virtue", pp. 314-317.

<sup>141</sup> Kant, "Groundwork of the Metaphysic of Ethics", pp. 57-60.

<sup>142</sup> In the *Metaphysics of Morals*, Kant introduces the *Wille* to qualify (pure) practical reason, and the *Willkür* to qualify how man is confronted by the *Wille's* practical laws through imperatives. Allison, *Kant's theory of freedom*, pp. 129-131.

<sup>143</sup> Kant, "Introduction to *The Metaphysics of Morals*", p. 41. The Latin origins of *Wille* (*Voluntas*) and *Willkür* (*Arbitrium*) draw out their difference well. Hegel, *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, p. 399, f. 2.

<sup>144</sup> Allison, *Idealism and freedom*, p. 129.

<sup>145</sup> O'Neill, "Vindicating reason", pp. 292-295.

<sup>146</sup> Beck, "Kant's Two Conceptions of the Will", pp. 41-42.

## *Epistemological Critique in Kant and Hegel*

if we do not occupy an entirely different station, when we regard ourselves, as by means of freedom, spontaneous *a priori* causes, from that station which we hold when we represent to ourselves our actions as events in the system we see presented to our senses.<sup>147</sup>

It is in the *Critique of Practical Reason* that Kant elaborates man's dual stations and talks of the idea of freedom as the keystone of the whole architecture of human reason. Freedom is the *ratio essendi* of *Moralität*, and *Moralität* is the *ratio cognoscendi* of autonomy.<sup>148</sup> Whereas Kant proclaims in the *Critique of Pure Reason* that man experiences things as phenomena, he now argues that practical reason gives man access to the noumenon of the idea of freedom, namely, man-in-himself.<sup>149</sup> The essential point is that from his phenomenal station man cannot establish any universal maxims that can be willed into *Moralität*. Indeed, in the empirical world man is exposed to pathological phenomena that result in heteronomy, which is an arbitrary, contingent ground for *Moralität* and the antithesis of the universal inclinations of the *Wille*. Only the noumenal station, where there is autonomy of *Wille*, satisfies the key kantian issues of obligation, duty and universal *Moralität*.<sup>150</sup> And, because normative justice demands that man be represented through his capacity for the idea of freedom, Kant implies that man has a sense of himself as both *homo noumenon* and *homo phænomenon*, or as both a transcendental and an empirical subject.<sup>151</sup> In the language of *Aufklärung*, intellectual freedom has the right of way over civil freedom, or mendelssohnian *Menschenaufklärung* before *Bürgeraufklärung*. Kant bifurcates man between the transcendental and the empirical worlds, for:

THAT NECESSITY OF NATURE, WHICH MAY NOT CONSORT WITH THE FREEDOM OF THE SUBJECT, ATTACHES SINGLY TO THE MODIFICATIONS OF A THING STANDING UNDER CONDITIONS OF TIME, *i.e.*, TO THE MODIFICATIONS OF THE ACTING SUBJECT AS PHENOMENON; ... yet, *e contra*, THE SELF-SAME SUBJECT, being self-conscious of itself as a thing in itself, CONSIDERS ITS EXISTENCE AS SOMEWHAT, DETACHED FROM CONDITIONS OF TIME, AND ITSELF, SO FAR FORTH, AS ONLY DETERMINABLE BY LAWS GIVEN IT BY ITS OWN

<sup>147</sup> Kant, "Groundwork of the Metaphysic of Ethics", p. 62.

<sup>148</sup> Kant, "Critique of Practical Reason", pp. 118-120.

<sup>149</sup> Kant, "Critique of Practical Reason", pp. 124-144.

<sup>150</sup> Kant, "Inquiry into the *À Priori* Operations of the Will", pp. 99-100.

<sup>151</sup> Kant, *The Metaphysics of Morals*, p. 65. Kant is reluctant to attribute freedom to man under the concept of causality, as it abandons him *qua homo phænomenon* to blind chance in the empirical world. So the concept of causality of freedom is attributed to the same man *qua homo noumenon*. In fact, both of Kant's revolutions, the copernican and rousseauian, stand or fall on this separation, for they contain mutually incompatible concepts that would, as Kant acknowledges, contradict each other were there not the *homo noumenon/homo phænomenon* distinction. Kant, "Critique of Practical Reason", pp. 195-201.

## *Epistemological Critique in Kant and Hegel*

REASON; ... in its consciousness of an intelligible cogitable existence, ... [the subject is] NOUMENON.<sup>152</sup>

### **2.vi. Hegel's Critique of *Aufklärung***

To realise the free thought and action pivotal to maturity, Kant's critical philosophy advocates a metaphysics of experience which gives man an objective knowledge of things, and a metaphysics of morals in which man's autonomy enables freedom and the constitution of *Moralität*. However, his epistemological critique that depends on the faculty of understanding to limit reason also requires *homo noumenon* to bear *Moralität* in mind every time he acts as *homo phænomenon* in the empirical world. Essentially, *Aufklärung* is true in theory but not in practice, and whilst Hegel applauds Kant's distinction between reason and understanding, he rejects the discipline of the former by the latter. Reason, Hegel claims, proffers an objective experience of things as they are rather than they appear, and the task of epistemological critique is to ensure that thinking freely is synonymous with truth. Also, because the formality and abstractness of *Moralität* bifurcate man when he thinks from himself when he acts, Hegel seeks to reconcile *homo noumenon's* duties with *homo phænomenon's* desires. He gives content and substance to *Moralität* through *Sittlichkeit*, which enables the self-actualisation of the autonomous subject's authentic being. With absolute idealism and the prioritisation of recognition as the means to autonomy, Hegel introduces the post-*Aufklärung* world of Geist that is the product of scientific rather than critical philosophy, and in this section I elaborate Hegel's critique of Kant's metaphysics of objective experience and morals before, in sections 2.vii. and 2.viii., I consider Hegel's epistemological critique of man's phenomenology of objective experience and his science of socially mediated recognition.

Hegel's epistemology of a rational knowledge of the absolute personifies Kant's classical sense of metaphysics, "the attempt to know the unconditioned through pure reason".<sup>153</sup> On this basis, Hegel's epistemological critique portrays man's objective experience of absolute idealism, which is grounded on a relation between words and things that is neither dogmatic, skeptical nor critical, but ideal. It represents the apotheosis of the criticisms levelled at Kant by pietists and fellow logicians, who criticise him on grounds of causality and deduction,<sup>154</sup> as well as by

<sup>152</sup> Kant, "Groundwork of the Metaphysic of Ethics", pp. 138-139.

<sup>153</sup> Beiser, "Introduction", pp. 3-4.

<sup>154</sup> Nelson, *Progress and Regress, Volume II*, pp. 26-33.

## *Epistemological Critique in Kant and Hegel*

the post-kantian idealists, most notably Johann Fichte, who spearheads the search for knowledge of a thing-in-itself,<sup>155</sup> and Friedrich Schelling, who completes the return of German philosophy to neo-platonic idealism.<sup>156</sup> For Fichte and Schelling, Kant's metaphysics is absurd in its method of the prioritisation of understanding, but correct in the problem of grounding it is derived from.<sup>157</sup> The task is to reconcile, "in a higher systematic unity, ... Kant's fundamental dualism of nature and freedom".<sup>158</sup>

Hegel, who takes on board Fichte's concern with the reality of things,<sup>159</sup> endeavours to complete this reconciliation. To do so, he reconceives Schelling's Absolute as *Geist*,<sup>160</sup> which becomes a relation of philosophical identity between thought and reality that idealises the world.<sup>161</sup> Consequently, Hegel says that Kant errs in his prioritisation of understanding and in the straight jacket he designs for reason. To examine knowledge in an attempt to establish its conditions is akin to the resolution not to venture into the water until one has learnt to swim.<sup>162</sup> Kant rightly takes man beyond the traditional love of knowledge, but he denies the platonic concept of reason its right to know a thing-in-itself,<sup>163</sup> which would give man access to the true structure of the world.<sup>164</sup> Hegel thus distances himself from Kant's metaphysics that grounds objective experience in a monochromatic formalism.<sup>165</sup> In contrast, Hegel says reason is constitutive of truth and not just

<sup>155</sup> Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism*, pp. 45-53; Nelson, *Progress and Regress, Volume II*, pp. 38-59.

<sup>156</sup> In 1799 Fichte is accused of atheism for his belief that God is a moral force rather than a person. He is forced to leave Jena *Universität* – he moves to Berlin *Universität* – where Fichte is replaced by Schelling, who secures Hegel the post of *Privatdozent*. Later, in 1816 and after a short tenure at Heidelberg *Universität*, Hegel succeeds Fichte at Berlin. Inwood, "Introducing Hegel", pp. 20-22.

<sup>157</sup> Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism*, pp. 63-65.

<sup>158</sup> Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism*, p. 44.

<sup>159</sup> Llewelyn, "Kantian Antinomy and Hegelian Dialectic", pp. 92-95.

<sup>160</sup> "Since Schelling's absolute excluded its modes, which determine the specific characteristics of a thing, Hegel likened it to 'a night when all cows are black'. If we are to remain true to its definition, Hegel argued, then it is necessary to conceive of the absolute as the *whole* of substance *and* its modes, as the *unity* of the infinite *and* finite. Since the absolute must include all the flux and appearance within itself, Hegel called it 'a Bacchanalian revel in which no member is not drunken'". Beiser, "Introduction", p. 7.

<sup>161</sup> In Hegel's metaphysics, *Geist* is an identity between form and things that is supplied by dialectical reason, and in his logic it is the *Begriff* (concept or notion) *qua* identity of concepts with the subject of them, man, with the objects of concepts and with other concepts themselves. Thus, insofar as the world is ultimately determined by the concept of *Geist*, *Geist* is Hegel's ultimate *Begriff*. Inwood, *Hegel*, pp. 26-42; Priest, "Subjectivity and Objectivity in Kant and Hegel", p. 116; Smith, *Hegel's Critique of Liberalism*, pp. 34-35.

<sup>162</sup> Hartnack, "Categories and Things-In-Themselves", pp. 77-81.

<sup>163</sup> Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 3.

<sup>164</sup> Findlay, "Hegelianism and Platonism".

<sup>165</sup> Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, pp. 5-9.

## *Epistemological Critique in Kant and Hegel*

regulative of its apparent possibility.<sup>166</sup> Man's knowledge of things must "not stop half way but, as it were, go over into things; Hegel's absolute idealism, in which Spirit [takes] over from the mere unity of apperception, profes[s] to show how this [can] be done".<sup>167</sup> Scientific philosophy grasps a thing in- and for-itself, as an ontologically primary substance and a subject.<sup>168</sup>

Without the philosophical reign of reason over the understanding, the transformation of the post-reformation world into *Geist's* world, where thought can govern reality and autonomy is real, remains a dream.<sup>169</sup> And so Hegel's scientific philosophy entails a shift from transcendental idealism's ground of the unmediated experience of man, to absolute idealism's unmediated experience of *Geist*.<sup>170</sup> Or, as Pippin suggests, Kant's *a priori* and the analytic-synthetic propositions of reason are exchanged for Hegel's notion of *Geist* and dialectical reason.<sup>171</sup> With his metaphysics of absolute idealism, Hegel deems himself to have overcome the four core problems of Kant's metaphysics of objective experience: it is finite, or limited to understanding; it is subjective, which implies things are dependent on man; it is abstract, or, insofar as things are conceived atomistically and not relationally, undialectical; and it is personal, for reality is constructed psychologically, not socially.<sup>172</sup> For Hegel, *Moralität* is positive because it establishes that the autonomous subject is the hinge on which epistemological critique swings.<sup>173</sup> But he also claims that with Kant philosophy reaches the summit and the limit of the concept of the autonomous, self-conscious will,<sup>174</sup> for, as Pippin says,

the Kantian account of human subjectivity restricts itself to the point of view of 'consciousness' alone, and so does not understand subjectivity as it should be,

<sup>166</sup> Lukács, *Hegel's False and His Genuine Ontology*, p. 77; Priest, "Introduction", pp. 4-12.

<sup>167</sup> Walsh, "Kant as seen by Hegel", p. 211.

<sup>168</sup> Inwood, "Kant and Hegel on Space and Time", pp. 59-64; Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, pp. 10-14.

<sup>169</sup> Stern, *Hegel, Kant and the Structure of the Object*, pp. 35-41.

<sup>170</sup> Ritter, "Hegel and the Reformation", pp. 183-188. Hegel describes his similarities with and differences between Kant on the question of consciousness as follows: "[Kant's] view has at least the merit of giving a correct expression to the nature of all consciousness. The tendency of all man's endeavours is to understand the world, to appropriate and subdue it to himself: and to this end the positive reality of the world must be as it were crushed and pounded, in other words, idealized. At the same time we must note that it is not the mere act of *our* personal self-consciousness which introduces an absolute unity into the variety of sense. Rather, this identity is itself the absolute. The absolute is, as it were, so kind as to leave individual things to their own enjoyment, and it again draws these back to the absolute unity". Hegel, *Encyclopaedia Logic*, quoted in Stern, *Hegel, Kant and the Structure of the Object*, pp. 39-40.

<sup>171</sup> Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism*, pp. 249-251.

<sup>172</sup> Priest, "Introduction", pp. 21-28.

<sup>173</sup> Priest, "Introduction", pp. 40-41.

<sup>174</sup> O'Hagan, "On Hegel's Critique", p. 136.

## *Epistemological Critique in Kant and Hegel*

as 'spirit', *Geist*. To make good such a charge, Hegel attempts to reformulate the notion of subjectivity itself, attacking virtually all of the post-Cartesian assumptions, denying that consciousness is 'private', 'inner', or a 'spectator' of itself and world, and asserting that it is, in a special sense of the term, 'communal', 'public', and even socially interactive.<sup>175</sup>

Of Hegel's four main criticisms of kantian *Moralität*, it is his classical objection to Kant's abstract universalism and moral formalism that are most relevant to a post-*Aufklärung* reconciliation of autonomy with recognition.<sup>176</sup> Firstly, Hegel argues that the transcendental subject, who has the lord of duty in himself, legislates himself into rather than out of immaturity. The difference between the soul of mediæval christianity, Hegel writes, and Kant's transcendental subject, whose noumenal idea of freedom obliges him toward the universal duties of *Moralität*,

is not that the former make themselves slaves, while the latter is free, but that the former have their lord outside themselves, while the latter carries his lord in himself, yet at the same time is his own slave. For the particular—impulses, inclinations, pathological love, sensuous experience, or whatever else it is called—the universal is necessarily and always something alien and objective.<sup>177</sup>

The reigns to how to think and act freely, which Kant wrestled from christian ontology and commandeered with critical philosophy's four moments of objectivity, normativity, immortality and subjectivity, are effectively ceded by the abstract universalism of his *Moralität*, and it falls on Hegel to remind the philosopher of *Aufklärung* that man belongs to this world, *Diesseits*.<sup>178</sup>

Secondly, the empirical subject is separated from the particular, or what Hegel's student, Ludwig Feuerbach, coins man's *Gattungswesen*, his empirical species-being.<sup>179</sup> Insofar as he performs pure duty vis-à-vis a beyond, a *Jenseits*, that is unfathomable to man, the formality of kantian *Moralität* merely exacerbates *homo noumenon's* tyranny over *homo phænomenon*.<sup>180</sup> Each time the empirical subject is tempted by the particular, his transcendental capacity for autonomy carries him

<sup>175</sup> Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism*, pp. 35-36.

<sup>176</sup> Allison, *Kant's theory of freedom*, pp. 180-191. Hegel further contests Kant's metaphysics of morals in respect of the impotence of its ought, such that moral insight into the empirical subject's practice—man's is—remains unrealised, as well as of the latent terrorism of its pure conviction, which sanctions the ought of the *Gesinnungsterror* of 1793-1794 that Hegel witnesses the dusk of. Habermas, "Morality and Ethical Life", pp. 327-331 and p. 333, f. 5.

<sup>177</sup> Hegel, *The Spirit of Christianity and Its Fate*, quoted in Allison, *Kant's theory of freedom*, p. 185.

<sup>178</sup> Wood, *Hegel's Ethical Thought*, pp. 146-153.

<sup>179</sup> Toews, "Transformations of Hegelianism: 1805-1846", p. 396.

<sup>180</sup> Soll, *An Introduction to Hegel's Metaphysics*, pp. 142-145.



## *Epistemological Critique in Kant and Hegel*

back to the purgatory in which *Aufklärung* is suspended, *Moralität*. Kant's intellectual and civil freedom, which are based on the capacities of autonomy and choice that are executed by the *Wille* and *Willkür*, fail to reconcile man to himself.<sup>181</sup> The diremption that Hegel and his generation believe Plato first grapples with persists in *Aufklärung*,<sup>182</sup> and Rousseau's analysis of social man, who lives constantly outside himself and through opinion, "... so that he seems to receive the consciousness of his own existence merely from the judgement of others",<sup>183</sup> is exacerbated by Kant's bifurcation of man into a transcendental and an empirical subject. What the empirical inclinations propose, the kantian formal maxims man ought to live by dispose.<sup>184</sup>

### **2.vii. *Geist* and the Phenomenology of Objective Experience**

Hegel's critique of Kant expresses the insecurity of a generation which, after the *Gesinnungsterror* of 1793-1794 and the bloody adventures of Napoleon, is apprehensive of the consequences of *Aufklärung*.<sup>185</sup> A metaphysics of objective experience does not grasp the truth of the world, and Kant's epistemological critique leaves man at the centre of it without actually being there. Relatedly, the metaphysics of morals outlines the conceptual armoury of freedom, but it does no more than provide man with abstract and formal strategies about how to exercise it. Man's ability to think and act freely needs re-assurance, and in the prefatory and introductory remarks to the *Phenomenology of Spirit* Hegel charges scientific philosophy with knowledge of a thing-in-itself, which reconciles the essence of man-in-himself with the empirical world.<sup>186</sup> Further, in opposition to romanticism's flight into the abstract Absolute,<sup>187</sup> and its treatment of the state as a servant of man's emotions and feelings,<sup>188</sup> Hegel makes philosophy exoteric and intelligible to the *gesunder Menschenverstand* of the man on the Jena horse-cart.<sup>189</sup> For the most part, however, Hegel's phenomenology is an epistemological critique of philosophy's historical modes, which includes kantian critical philosophy, and he

<sup>181</sup> Nelson, *Progress and Regress*, Volume II, pp. 33-37.

<sup>182</sup> Smith, *Hegel's Critique of Liberalism*, pp. 17-18; Dallmayr, G. W. F. *Hegel*, pp. 94-95.

<sup>183</sup> Rousseau, "Discourse on the Origin of Inequality", p. 116.

<sup>184</sup> Westphal, "The basic context and structure of Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*", pp. 252-253.

<sup>185</sup> Dallmayr, G. W. F. *Hegel*, pp. 79-87.

<sup>186</sup> Lukács, *Hegel's False and His Genuine Ontology*, pp. 72-74.

<sup>187</sup> Findlay, "Preface", pp. v-vii.

<sup>188</sup> Hegel, *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, Preface, p. 18.

<sup>189</sup> Sallis, "Hegel's Concept of Presentation", pp. 25-26; Norman, *Hegel's Phenomenology*, pp. 9-14.

## *Epistemological Critique in Kant and Hegel*

seeks to channel it into a scientific mode that reconciles man to himself in *Geist* and *Sittlichkeit*.<sup>190</sup>

Although it is not a dialectical method,<sup>191</sup> phenomenology describes the historical modes of individual and social consciousness or experience.<sup>192</sup> The phenomenology of social experience depicts the dialectic of man's desire, which involves his consciousness of the socio-cultural limits of each historical mode of spirit, religion and absolute knowledge. Phenomenology portrays how man raises himself up (*aufheben*) through modes of social experience, which culminate in *Geist*'s frustration by the limits of *Aufklärung*.<sup>193</sup> Man's social experience is examined in the next section in terms of the recognition that is fulfilled in *Sittlichkeit*,<sup>194</sup> whereas here I explicate man's individual experience of the dialectic of knowing with its modes of consciousness, self-consciousness and reason.<sup>195</sup> In his individual experience, that is, man cognates himself through his recognition of his otherness from things in terms of sense-certainty, perception and kantian understanding.<sup>196</sup> Hegel especially criticises the last of these, the transcendental subject's "wanderlust born of the desire to explain",<sup>197</sup> because it allows understanding to mediate between man's reason and things.<sup>198</sup> What man finds is that his truth is something other than himself, which only his post-*Aufklärung* individual experience of *Geist*'s moment as reason and man's social experience of *Sittlichkeit* can resolve.<sup>199</sup> In the meantime, Hegel says,

[r]aised above perception, consciousness exhibits itself closed in a unity with

<sup>190</sup> Flay, "The History of Philosophy", pp. 54-58.

<sup>191</sup> Dove, "Hegel's Phenomenological Method", pp. 52-57.

<sup>192</sup> According to Westphal, a mode (or form) of consciousness "is an expository device consisting of a pair of basic principles. One of these principles specifies the kind of empirical knowledge of which a form of consciousness presumes itself capable. The other principle specifies the general structure of the kind of object which that form of consciousness presumes to find in the world. Taken together, these two principles constitute what Hegel calls a form of consciousness' 'certainty' (*Gewißheit*)". Westphal, "Hegel's Solution to the Dilemma of the Criterion", pp. 84-85.

<sup>193</sup> *Aufhebung* in its verbal form, *aufheben*, is a term of art that is paradoxical-sounding. It denotes that which is contained in a new mode of experience, and to proceed to his new individual-social unity man has to sublate present contradictions, even modify them out of their original, particular sense, in order to move on to his real and universal experience in *Geist*. Cf. Forster, "Hegel's Dialectical Method", pp. 132-133; Sallis, "Hegel's Concept of Presentation", p. 49, f. 7; Jagentowicz Mills, "Hegel's *Antigone*", p. 243.

<sup>194</sup> Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, pp. 55-56.

<sup>195</sup> Norman, *Hegel's Phenomenology*, pp. 24-25.

<sup>196</sup> Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, pp. 58-102.

<sup>197</sup> Westphal, "Hegel's Phenomenon of Perception", p. 129.

<sup>198</sup> Norman, *Hegel's Phenomenology*, pp. 40-43.

<sup>199</sup> Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 35.

## *Epistemological Critique in Kant and Hegel*

the supersensible world through the mediating term of appearance, through which it gazes into this background [lying behind appearance]. ... This curtain [of appearance] hanging before the inner world is therefore drawn away, and we have the inner being [the 'I'] gazing into the inner world ... [or] *self-consciousness*. ... [But] this knowledge of what is the truth of appearance as ordinarily conceived, ... is itself only a result of a complex movement whereby the modes of consciousness 'meaning', perceiving, and the Understanding, vanish; and it will be equally evident that the cognition of *what consciousness knows in knowing itself*, requires a still more complex movement, the exposition of which is contained in what follows.<sup>200</sup>

In terms of man's experience of objectivity, with Kant's tautology of 'I am I' man has unmediated being-for-himself only, and Hegel's goal is to demonstrate that man's attainment of transcendental subjectivity commences in the dialectic of the embodied subject's animal desire for self-preservation.<sup>201</sup> Originally located in the world, man's animal desire moves him to satisfy his material needs by reproduction, which entails an expression of individuality that places him at the centre of the world but dirempts him from the universality it manifests. Importantly, individuality is the pre-condition for man's human desire for *Selbstgewißheit*, or the truth of self-certainty.<sup>202</sup> It designates man's notion of himself and the aims he strives for, which can only be fulfilled by the recognition of another self-consciousness.<sup>203</sup> Human desire thus implores man to leave behind the colourful show of the sensuous here-and-now, as well as the kantian nightlike void of the supersensible beyond. In so doing, the hegelian subject steps out into the spiritual daylight of the present where recognition takes place.<sup>204</sup>

But before man can step into post-*Aufklärung* daylight, in which scientific philosophy reigns in *Geist's* world of the infinite living unity of all things,<sup>205</sup> Hegel must first chart the phenomenological journey that transforms animal desire into human desire. The satisfaction of human desire through recognition – the reciprocal esteem, value and acknowledgement of worth between two people – is precipitated by the acknowledgement between men of the existence of others in their individuality and the universal endeavour of all men toward *Geist*. In reference to Kant, Hegel says that man recognises that others are not utilisable for his own

<sup>200</sup> Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, pp. 102-103.

<sup>201</sup> Westphal, *History and Truth*, pp. 122-126.

<sup>202</sup> Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, pp. 108-109. Individuality should not be confused with identity *qua* the outcome of the intersubjective relation of recognition that is fulfilled in *Sittlichkeit*. Individuality is unmediated and man's being-for-himself is temporary and dependent on the world.

<sup>203</sup> Taylor, *Hegel*, pp. 137-138.

<sup>204</sup> Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, pp. 110-111.

<sup>205</sup> Lamb, *Hegel*, pp. 156-159.

## *Epistemological Critique in Kant and Hegel*

purposes,<sup>206</sup> and to show the other that he is independent of the world necessitates that each man abolish the things upon which his animal desire depends.<sup>207</sup> Yet neither man can labour on things while the other watches, for it demands that he risk his life to impress the other and it implies that the other already possesses pure self-consciousness, such that he is the sole arbiter of man's independence. As a result, they engage in a life-and-death struggle to demonstrate their independence from animal desire and to receive the recognition that each man's being-for-itself is his essence.

Although the death of either man would obviously be self-defeating, Hegel suggests that through this experience self-consciousness learns that life is as essential to it as pure self-consciousness.<sup>208</sup> The human desire for permanent *Selbstgewißheit* awakens man to the fact of his material dependence on the world. At the same time, he becomes aware that human desire is a spiritual need for the freedom recognition affords. Indeed, such is humanity's desire for freedom that man risks death to procure it, for to follow the impulse of appetite is inhuman, whilst the unloved life is not worth living.<sup>209</sup> Thus, the life-and-death struggle ends in a truce, where one man is independent and a being-for-himself, whilst his opponent remains embroiled in thinghood as a being-for-another. Their mutual fear of death enforces the first social relation of inequality in the shape of the dependence between the lord and bondsman, instead of the mutual reciprocity that is desired.

Nonetheless, Hegel is quick to dispel the intuition that the lord prospers from political and socio-economic inequality. His *Selbstgewißheit* is dependent on the recognition of the servile, unessential consciousness of the bondsman, whilst in his relation to the world, which is mediated by the bondsman, the lord's truth of self-certainty is contingent and impermanent. To the extent that he does not labour, he is alienated from his species-being or animal desire. What is absent is the absolute certainty of the truth of himself, which only another autonomous self-consciousness can provide.<sup>210</sup> Like a jilted lover, the lord is left to equivocate whether his being-for-himself is indeed who he essentially is.

<sup>206</sup> Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 112.

<sup>207</sup> Taylor discusses the dialectical idea of abolition in terms of Hegel's concepts of *Aufhebung* (to preserve at the same time as to annul) and *Versöhnung* (to reconcile). Taylor, *Hegel*, p. 118.

<sup>208</sup> Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, pp. 112-115.

<sup>209</sup> Hegel uses the conceptual metaphor of love to aid the comprehension of recognition in *Sittlichkeit*; that is, "only in love are we one with the object, neither dominating nor dominated, a reciprocal giving and taking, a Juliet: the more I give to thee, the more I have". We see "only ourselves in the beloved, and in turn, we see the beloved as not ourselves". Westphal, *History and Truth*, pp. 131-135.

<sup>210</sup> Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, pp. 116-117.

## *Epistemological Critique in Kant and Hegel*

By contrast, through work the bondsman fulfils his desire and avoids a fleeting relation to the world, as work forms and shapes things.<sup>211</sup> It is through the bondsman's formative activity, when labour *qua* reproduction of needs becomes work *qua* production of socio-cultural goods, that he gives an element of permanence to the world and establishes his independence from it.<sup>212</sup> Work socialises man's animal desire into reflexive, human desire. It gives the bondsman a self-will within the permanent order of things, and through his capacity to be autonomous the bondsman posits himself as a being-for-himself whose human desire for *Selbstgewißheit* is derived from the things he produces. In opposition to Kant's identity of identity without difference, or the unmediated subject who intuits things in picture-thoughts without reflection, there is Hegel's bondsman's identity of identity and difference, or actual rather than virtual self-consciousness. The bondsman knows himself and the world because he transforms the things which constitute it.<sup>213</sup> As Hegel summarises, with the bondsman:

we are in the presence of self-consciousness in a new shape, ... which *thinks* or is a free self-consciousness. For *to think* does not mean to be an *abstract* 'I', but an 'I' which [relates] ... itself to objective being in such a way that its significance is the *being-for-self* of the consciousness for which it is [an object]. For in *thinking*, the object does not present itself in picture-thoughts but in *Notions*, i.e. in a distinct *being-in-itself*.<sup>214</sup>

It is through the bondsman's absolute mediation of the world by thought or notions, Hegel argues, that man raises himself up from the world to be a transcendental subject.<sup>215</sup> Where Kant posits the transcendental subject *a priori* as his condition of possibility for epistemological critique, Hegel examines the conditions of possibility for the transcendental subject.<sup>216</sup> From Socrates to Descartes and Kant, transcendental philosophy uses a constructive metaphysics with its logical circle of knowing before you know.<sup>217</sup> In contrast, Hegel's descriptive epistemological critique departs from man's individual embodied consciousness as one phenomenon in the world of phenomena and climaxes in the social experience of *Geist*.<sup>218</sup> Through the bondsman Hegel shows how man's self-understanding and

<sup>211</sup> Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 118.

<sup>212</sup> Bernstein, "From self-consciousness to community", pp. 34-35.

<sup>213</sup> Westphal, *History and Truth*, pp. 122-126.

<sup>214</sup> Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, pp. 119-120.

<sup>215</sup> Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 21.

<sup>216</sup> Wood, *Hegel's Ethical Thought*, p. 91.

<sup>217</sup> Lamb, *Hegel*, pp. 3-13.

<sup>218</sup> Lamb, *Hegel*, pp. 34-41.

## *Epistemological Critique in Kant and Hegel*

(an unequal) society are born together. The lord-bondsman relation is the superstructure of the human desire for recognition, which albeit subsequent to the satisfaction of animal desire's material needs is only fulfilled where there is social equality.<sup>219</sup> Phenomenological critique is a dialogue between man's individual and social experience, between the historicity of man's modes of consciousness, which culminate in the human desire for recognition, and the history of man's practico-social conditions, which make this experience possible.<sup>220</sup> For its part, Hegel's scientific philosophy apprehends the post-*Aufklärung* world of the rational state, where the journey of the transcendental subject of reason collides with the progress of the historical career of *Geist* that is manifest as *Sittlichkeit*.

### **2.viii. Recognition and *Sittlichkeit***

Hegel's epistemological critique identifies the social modes of experience of spirit, religion and absolute knowledge, which mirror man's individual experience of consciousness, self-consciousness and reason. Yet, because the individual is dirempted from the social, *Geist* is imperfectly manifest in the first two modes of social experience as true and self-estranged spirit. It is only in the post-*Aufklärung* world of *Geist*, when Hegel observes the social experience that is mediated by *Sittlichkeit*, that subjectivity is resolved as self-certain spirit, where individual experience *qua* reciprocal recognition leads to the union of the subjective in the objective.<sup>221</sup>

*Geist*, however, has a long history and first appears as *Sittlichkeit* in greek antiquity. Here, it is bifurcated between the *polis*, where duty and customs determine the citizen's immediate social experience, and the *oikos*, in which the citizen's individuality allows him reflective individual experience. Subsequently, in græco-roman antiquity, communal *Sittlichkeit* is overcome by *Geist* as empire. The primacy of law supersedes custom, and apart from his socio-political roles the citizen's non-legal experience is irrelevant to the rights-based empire.<sup>222</sup> After the extreme of immediate social experience in Athens, the opposite of unrecognised individual experience in Rome causes antiquity to founder. Similarly, diremption persists in mediæval christianity through to 1789. Self-estranged *Geist* is manifest as man's attempt to know nature and to place himself at the centre of a garden of

<sup>219</sup> Westphal, *History and Truth*, pp. 136-138.

<sup>220</sup> Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, pp. 55-56.

<sup>221</sup> Westphal, "Hegel and Husserl", pp. 116-129.

<sup>222</sup> Taylor, *Hegel*, pp. 396-397.

## *Epistemological Critique in Kant and Hegel*

Eden.<sup>223</sup> It results in a split between the material world, where a struggle ensues between absolutist state power and capitalist wealth, and a schism in the transcendental world between faith and enlightenment, which results in the dominance of the latter's rational will.<sup>224</sup> Finally, after 1789 *Geist* migrates to Berlin, where it emerges in Kant's *Moralität* as self-certain spirit, or man who has being-for-himself, and it cedes dignity and recognition irrespective of who one is.<sup>225</sup>

Hegel's history of man's socio-moral experience and his historicity of man's epistemologico-individual experience is a descriptive critique of the historical estrangement of the individual from the social.<sup>226</sup> Although *Aufklärung* prepares the ground for their reconciliation, it ultimately fails to re-assure the autonomous subject of the self-actualisation necessary for the recognition of his authentic being.<sup>227</sup> Thus, in addition to the epistemological critique of man's individual experience of objectivity, Hegel's scientific philosophy of right allows him both to explore the rationality of man's social experience and to apprehend in thought the presence of *Sittlichkeit*, where the particular is reconciled to the universal.<sup>228</sup> As with Rousseau, Hegel conceives of freedom as an intersubjective question insofar as man is born socially and his subjectivity is *a posteriori* to politically mediated recognition. The transcendental subject's human desire is tantamount to a will or mode of thought, which translates itself into existence due to its need to know itself as united in its innermost being *qua* comprehended by others within the truths of community.<sup>229</sup> If Rousseau implies autonomy and recognition, and Kant perfects the former to the abstract and formal detriment of the latter, Hegel concretises autonomy via recognition, for the right of individuals to their subjective determination of freedom is only possible insofar as they belong to an ethical actuality where the certainty of freedom, or *Selbstgewißheit*, has its truth.<sup>230</sup>

As Taylor suggests, Hegel's philosophy of right attempts to re-unify the radical freedom of the capacity of autonomy with man's desire for recognition.<sup>231</sup>

<sup>223</sup> Westphal, *History and Truth*, pp. 154-172.

<sup>224</sup> Taylor, *Hegel*, pp. 403-416.

<sup>225</sup> Ritter, "Morality and Ethical Life", pp. 151-158.

<sup>226</sup> Hofmeister, "Moral Autonomy in Kant and Hegel", pp. 147-149.

<sup>227</sup> Westphal, *History and Truth*, pp. 173-181.

<sup>228</sup> Hegel, *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, Preface, pp. 21-23. *Philosophisches Rechtslehre* is concerned with the idea of law or right, where the idea is the confluence of the essence of free will and the existence of community. Hegel contrasts it with positive law, which is based on a mix of tradition and rationality. Dallmayr, G. W. F. *Hegel*, pp. 102-104.

<sup>229</sup> Hegel, *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, Preface, p. 11.

<sup>230</sup> Hegel, *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, §§ 153-155, pp. 196-197.

<sup>231</sup> Taylor, *Hegel*, pp. 23-49.

## *Epistemological Critique in Kant and Hegel*

Man willingly fulfils—indeed, finds his liberation in—his duties to the social institutions and practices of ethical life, which as they determine his character make duty synonymous with virtue. And, if a virtue that is essential to man's character can be called a custom, then duty appears as habit to him.<sup>232</sup> The gap between duty and desire, which is expressed by Kant through *homo noumenon* and *homo phaenomenon*, is reconciled through the individual and social journeys of *homo dialecticus*,<sup>233</sup> who depends on *Sittlichkeit* for his self-actualisation. Man's purpose is to will his free will through each dialectical stage of abstract right and morality until, in the ethical sphere via the mediation of the family and civil society, the concept of freedom determines the content of the rational state.<sup>234</sup> *Homo dialecticus* proceeds from a being-in-himself (will in its concept), who is safeguarded by abstract right *qua* freedom as property,<sup>235</sup> and a being-for-himself (will of the individual) in the realm of morality *qua* subjective freedom,<sup>236</sup> to a being-for-himself for and with another (self-sufficient individuality with universal substantiality).<sup>237</sup> That is, man's *Selbstgewißheit* is recognised in *Sittlichkeit* through family and civil society, and in its highest actuality his freedom is self-actualised in the context of the rational state, which is the manifestation of *Geist*.

Thus, ethical life is the unity of the will in its concept and the will of the individual ... . Its initial existence [*Dasein*] is again something natural, in the form of love and feeling [*Empfindung*]*—the family*; here, the individual [*das Individuum*] has overcome [*aufgehoben*] his personal aloofness and finds himself and his consciousness within a whole. But at the next stage [*of civil society*], we witness the disappearance of ethical life ... . [T]he family becomes fragmented and its members behave towards each other as self-sufficient individuals, for they are held together only by the bond of mutual need. ... [The] *state* emerges only at the third stage, that of ethical life and spirit, at which the momentous unification of self-sufficient individuality with universal substantiality takes place. ... [I]t is freedom in its most concrete shape, which is subordinate only to the supreme absolute truth of the world spirit.<sup>238</sup>

In *Sittlichkeit*, the I knows himself in the We *a propos* of *Geist*, which incorporates aspects of the divine insofar as it is *causa sui*, or transcendent of individual self-consciousness as its other and the ground of man's actions and his

<sup>232</sup> Hegel, *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, §§ 144-152, pp. 189-196.

<sup>233</sup> Foucault, "La folie, l'absence d'œuvre", p. 414.

<sup>234</sup> Hegel, *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, §§ 27-29, pp. 57-59.

<sup>235</sup> Hegel, *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, §§ 43-46, pp. 74-78.

<sup>236</sup> Hegel, *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, §§ 107-108, pp. 136-138.

<sup>237</sup> Hegel, *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, §§ 141-142, pp. 185-189.

<sup>238</sup> Hegel, *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, § 33, pp. 63-64.



## *Epistemological Critique in Kant and Hegel*

goal and purpose.<sup>239</sup> *Sittlichkeit* is a concept that remains true to Kant's idea of freedom which links *homo noumenon* to *Moralität*, whilst Hegel's aristotelianism enables him to introduce the human desire for *Selbstgewißheit* as fundamental to self-actualised recognition.<sup>240</sup> Through his return to Aristotle, Hegel's state is able to realise the ethical idea.<sup>241</sup> In place of *Moralität*'s formality, Hegel offers *Sittlichkeit*, and to overcome Kant's amoral—because abstract—*homo noumenon*, Hegel proposes his reconciliation with *homo phænomenon*.<sup>242</sup> Kant's bifurcated man is reconciled by *homo dialecticus*, who has personality safeguarded by abstract right, subjectivity or autonomy in the realm of morality, and recognition, *Selbstgewißheit*, in *Sittlichkeit*.

### ix. Synopsis

In this chapter I have described how, on basis of the subject who desires or rationally knows, Hobbes' material ontology and Locke's empirical realism justify an epistemological critique that sponsors man's right to autonomy. I have suggested that their ideas of objective experience and freedom are re-articulated by Rousseau, who conceives of the modern socio-economic chains which enslave man and of the coterminous birth of language and social relations. The latter fuels his epistemological critique, which highlights man's universal capacity for reason, whence autonomy, and the former his political critique, which ensures that through the constitution of the *volonté générale* man's autonomy is concretised by the process of recognition.

On this understanding, I have claimed that Rousseau defines the terms of reference for humanist critical thought. Thus, subsequent to critical philosophy's clarification of them with *Aufklärung*'s twin pillars of how to think and act freely, I have demonstrated that Kant proposes how to realise maturity through the metaphysics of the objective experience of an apparent world and man's realisation of his freedom through the referral of his motivation to act to *Moralität*. Nevertheless, as impressed as he is with Kant's subject's authentic being of autonomy, I have illustrated that Hegel's perception of man's diremption from things and his bifurcation *qua homo noumenon* and *homo phænomenon* give rise to a

<sup>239</sup> Westphal, *History and Truth*, pp. 138-146.

<sup>240</sup> Wood, "Hegel's ethics", pp. 216-217; O'Hagan, "On Hegel's Critique", pp. 137-138.

<sup>241</sup> Hofmeister, "Moral Autonomy in Kant and Hegel", pp. 142-145; Avineri, *Hegel's Theory of the Modern State*, pp. 177-178.

<sup>242</sup> The extent to which Hegel is successful in this enterprise is disputed by Allen Wood, who argues there is an unresolved tension in Hegel's ethical thought between the systematic superiority of *Sittlichkeit* and the historical superiority of *Moralität*. Wood, *Hegel's Ethical Thought*, p. 133.

### *Epistemological Critique in Kant and Hegel*

phenomenology of *Geist*, which charts man's idealisation of reality, whilst Hegel's scientific philosophy describes the social experience that reaches its completion in the rational state's manifestation of *Sittlichkeit*, where autonomy is cultivated through recognition. Hegel completes the epistemological critique which, from Hobbes and Locke to Kant via Rousseau, defines humanism's path to enlightenment. *Homo dialecticus* is obliged by already existent customs and duties, *sitten*, which specify the content of his moral actions, such that the gap between *Sollen* and *Sein*, about which Kant is silent, is bridged.<sup>243</sup> In summary, I have argued that Hegel's post-*Aufklärung* world of *Geist*, which is characterised by man's true knowledge that orders his objective experience of the world of things, affirms an epistemological critique at the centre of humanism, which re-assures the autonomous subject that his authentic being can be self-actualised in modernity through recognition.

<sup>243</sup> Taylor, *Hegel*, pp. 380-386.

# 3

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## *Political Critique in Rawls and Taylor*

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In chapter 2 I argued that Kant and Hegel epitomise humanism's epistemological critique which proceeds with a prior philosophy of the subject's autonomy and recognition, and my purpose here in chapter 3 is to explicate how freedom is advanced through political critique. To this end, I focus on Rawls and Taylor, who further to the objective experience proposed by Kant and Hegel safeguard and extend humanism's path to enlightenment. They do so via a justification of critique in a philosophy of the subject of right, who shoulders the normative experience that is necessary for political liberty and political liberation.

Rawls and Taylor use political critique either to legislate a moral doctrine of procedural right, which is based on the idea of public reason, or to interpret within a language community a moral ontology of hypergoods. Most importantly, as the philosophical descendants of Rousseau, Kant and Hegel, Rawls and Taylor initially refer to the moral agent's capacities for rational and reasonable autonomy, or to his capacity for self-interpretation and his desire for expression. Through political liberalism or a politics of recognition, they advocate procedural or substantive normative justice to regulate power, the nature and exercise of which is defined as the juridical state and mechanisms of repression, respectively. Like Kant and Hegel, Rawls and Taylor imply that the best way to do critical thought is through critique that is grounded in an *a priori* conception of freedom, and in this chapter I examine them as current custodians of humanism's attempt to realise these normative conditions for maturity.

Yet, as I shall argue in chapter 5, these conditions require the confined exclusion of those who are different and the normalisation of the citizen who is the same. Further, insofar as political critique turns on a theory of the subject's freedom, which as a compromise between autonomy and recognition is tantamount to embedded individuality, I claim that Taylor's politics of recognition, which takes

## *Political Critique in Rawls and Taylor*

into account the central claims of Rawls' political liberalism, recapitulates Hegel's conclusion of Kant's *Aufklärung* in *Geist*'s world. Whether from the point of view of epistemological or political critique, the humanist path to enlightenment, which is first suggested by Rousseau and practiced today by Kant's and Hegel's heirs, Rawls and Taylor, requires from those who travel along it a prior outline of a philosophy of the truth of the subject's being. In the name of critique, they assume that truth is independent from, rather than inherent to, *pouvoir/savoir*. As such, because truth is always perspectival, humanism fails to realise a universal state of being autonomous in thought and action.

### **3.i. Political Philosophy and Normative Experience**

To answer normative questions about the role of the juridical state, what justice is or the subject's needs are, the humanist political philosopher develops conceptual schemas and employs social contract or hermeneutic methods.<sup>1</sup> These act as the rational basis for his politico-moral norms, which according to Raymond Plant and Joseph Raz are tantamount to a political morality.<sup>2</sup> In this respect, Robert Nozick argues that moral philosophy is the background of, as well as the boundary for, the normative prescriptions of political critique.<sup>3</sup> One of political philosophy's main roles is to justify the relation between juridical state power and man's freedom in terms of a moral theory of procedural justice that upholds political liberty, or of an articulation of the moral ontology of the substantive hypergoods that are central to political liberation. The subject of knowledge who grounds the objectivity that is promoted by epistemological critique doubles as the subject of right who justifies normative experience, and Rawls' and Taylor's political philosophy re-affirms humanist critical thought and its attempt, through critique that is based on a philosophy of the subject, to realise enlightenment.

Once again, for example, freedom is understood as a moral identity. After Kant's and Hegel's notion of it vis-à-vis knowledge, moral identity is constituted in relation to juridical power either *a priori* as autonomy, or *a posteriori* as recognition. Together, these humanist notions of what is required from politics if man's maturity is to be real capture, firstly, individual or collective selfhood, which is a

<sup>1</sup> In order to emphasise the connection of Rawls and Taylor to the philosophical tradition of humanism that I discussed in chapter 2, I refer to political philosophy rather than political theory. On this distinction, see Partridge, "Politics, Philosophy, Ideology", pp. 40-46.

<sup>2</sup> Plant, *Modern Political Thought*, p. 2; Raz, *The Morality of Freedom*, pp. 1-4.

<sup>3</sup> Nozick, *Anarchy, State, and Utopia*, p. 6.

### *Political Critique in Rawls and Taylor*

fundamental condition of social being that invokes something deep and worthy of preservation. Autonomy and recognition serve, secondly, as a ground for social and political action, which is opposed to class interest. Thirdly, autonomy denotes an essential sameness. Finally, recognition refers to the processual development of collective self-understanding.<sup>4</sup> In a nutshell, autonomy defines the normative subject's authentic being and recognition the way in which it is to be self-actualised. Autonomy and recognition justify political critique which advocates political liberty and political liberation: they enjoy the status of an authentic moral identity, as morality is presumed to be a private, apolitical matter that is distinct from power.<sup>5</sup> One could say that autonomy and recognition are the normative cement of humanism's path to enlightenment.

On the liberal hand, for instance, political philosophy investigates the extent to which there should be a state at all, and by definition if there is a need for *political* philosophy.<sup>6</sup> Somewhat less radically, Kymlicka writes that political philosophy ought no longer to be concerned with those areas central to the constitutional state, and he takes as one of his examples the semantic analysis of the concept of power.<sup>7</sup> Instead, political philosophy ought to evaluate rival theories of justice,<sup>8</sup> which are "primarily concerned with the relationship between the individual and the state, and with limiting the state's intrusions on the liberties of citizens".<sup>9</sup> In the liberal case, political philosophy and a theory of justice are synonymous.<sup>10</sup> The assumption about the nature of power, which is state-centred, and its exercise by repressive mechanisms, is held constant. It allows the legislation of a normative theory of procedural justice through which political liberalism keeps a grip on juridical state power in the name of the subject's political liberty.

On the communitarian hand, political philosophy is not only concerned with

<sup>4</sup> Brubaker and Cooper, "Beyond 'identity'", pp. 6-11. I borrow these senses of the concept of identity from Rogers Brubaker and Frederick Cooper. They point them out to argue that the identity industry suffers from a crisis of overproduction and a consequent devaluation of meaning, which requires a shift beyond identity "in the name of conceptual clarity required for social analysis and political understanding". Brubaker and Cooper, "Beyond 'identity'", p. 3 and p. 36.

<sup>5</sup> In the subjectivist turn of the eighteenth century, the moral accent that had previously emphasised the subject's intuitive moral sense of right and wrong is eroded by an ethic of authenticity. It is, Taylor argues, an ethic first elaborated by Rousseau, and it describes the subject who chooses a moral sense without the intervention of others. Taylor, *The Malaise of Modernity*, pp. 25-29.

<sup>6</sup> Nozick, *Anarchy, State, and Utopia*, p. 4.

<sup>7</sup> Kymlicka, *Contemporary Political Philosophy*, p. 1.

<sup>8</sup> Kymlicka, *Contemporary Political Philosophy*, pp. 7-8.

<sup>9</sup> Kymlicka, *Liberalism, Community, and Culture*, p. 1.

<sup>10</sup> Rawls, *Political Liberalism*, pp. xxiv-xxv.

### *Political Critique in Rawls and Taylor*

a normative check on the power of the state on behalf of autonomy, or of “justifying the right ... ways and identifying the wrong ways in which political power is to be exercised”, but also with evaluating “the nature of the claims which citizens can make on the state and on each other”.<sup>11</sup> Communitarianism raises the issue of intersubjective relations over and above liberalism’s basic concern with the subject’s relation to the state. As Taylor sees it, because selfhood and morality are inextricably intertwined themes, political philosophy must elucidate the subject’s moral ontology.<sup>12</sup> At the same time, a politics of recognition maintains the hypergoods which are necessary for the subject’s political liberation,<sup>13</sup> as “[t]o know who I am”, Taylor suggests, “is a species of knowing where I stand”.<sup>14</sup> Again, though, a communitarian theory of substantive justice, which charges politics with the normative mediation of power as a means to recognition, takes a state-centred, repressively exercised interpretation of power for granted. In its guise as Anglo-American political philosophy, and on the basis of its theory of power, humanism uses political critique to foster maturity through a procedural or a substantive conception of normative justice that regulates the juridical state.

#### **3.ii. Rawls and Procedural Justice**

As inheritors of the tradition of humanist critical thought, Rawls’ and Taylor’s political philosophy is partly related to the political ideologies of welfare liberalism and social democracy.<sup>15</sup> In this regard, social democracy and communitarianism share the political heritage of collectivism, as well as a hostility to liberal individualism and formal equality.<sup>16</sup> They are equally indebted to Hegel, too,<sup>17</sup> and it is possible to understand the communitarian emphasis on recognition as the logical continuation of social democracy’s challenge to the hegemony of liberalism.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Plant, *Modern Political Thought*, p. 2.

<sup>12</sup> Taylor, *Sources of the Self*, p. 3.

<sup>13</sup> Taylor, “The Nature and Scope of Distributive Justice”, pp. 290-291.

<sup>14</sup> Taylor, *Sources of the Self*, p. 27.

<sup>15</sup> Based on its observations about human nature and the processes of history, a political ideology provides a relatively coherent set of beliefs and thought about socio-political relationships, which includes a normative blueprint for their organisation. In contrast to the issue of knowing, which connects the concept of ideology to epistemology, a political ideology is related to doing and ideas about power. See Carver, “Ideology: The Career of a Concept”; Eatwell, “Ideologies: Approaches and Trends”; MacKenzie, “Introduction: The Arena of Ideology”.

<sup>16</sup> Barry, *An Introduction to Modern Political Theory*, pp. 24-29; Gutmann, “Communitarian Critics of Liberalism”, pp. 120-121. See especially Miller, “In What Sense Must Socialism Be Communitarian?”.

<sup>17</sup> Plant, *Modern Political Thought*, pp. 324-325.

<sup>18</sup> Beiner, “What Liberalism Means”.

### *Political Critique in Rawls and Taylor*

Already in 1968, for example, Robert Wolff speaks of community— affective, productive and rational—as the basis for a new social philosophy to counter liberalism.<sup>19</sup> However, as Richard Bellamy argues, welfare liberalism and social democracy serve as the combined point of departure for Rawls, the social democratic liberal,<sup>20</sup> whose alteration of the premises of political philosophy and re-affirmation of autonomy subsequently revitalises a communitarian opposition from a left-wing perspective.<sup>21</sup> On this assumption, I look in this section and the next at Rawls, and via a background of the liberal and communitarian debate I turn to Taylor in sections 3. iv. and 3.v., for as George Kateb points out,

Rawls' work, the great statement of individualism in this century, has helped many anti-individualist theorists to collect their thoughts and find their voice. Like any genuine work in political theory, *A Theory of Justice* energizes not only its cause but that of its opponents.<sup>22</sup>

Rawls rehabilitates Anglo-American political philosophy with the publication of its benchmark thesis in 1971. In general, *A Theory of Justice* disagrees with teleological ethical theories, which define the good independently of the right and the right as that which subsequently maximises the good.<sup>23</sup> Of particular concern to Rawls is utilitarianism's theory of justice, which as it is grounded in an ethic that seeks to maximise the satisfaction of desire defines utility in terms of an aggregation of happiness.<sup>24</sup> In so doing, individual rights and socio-economic equality have at best a secondary importance in a society that practices a utilitarian theory of justice.<sup>25</sup> For Rawls, the primary virtue that the institutions of the basic structure of society ought to promote is a distributive justice which balances freedom and equality. He reasons here in terms of the basic structure's profound effects on the

<sup>19</sup> Wolff, *The Poverty of Liberalism*, pp. 162ff..

<sup>20</sup> Bellamy, "Introduction", p. 10.

<sup>21</sup> Gutmann, "Communitarian Critics of Liberalism", p. 122.

<sup>22</sup> Kateb, "Democratic Individuality and the Meaning of Rights", p. 184.

<sup>23</sup> Because they tend to valorise moral hedonism, Rawls takes issue, like Kant before him, with the ethical theories of perfectionism, intuitionism and eudaimonism. Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, pp. 22-45 and pp. 548-560.

<sup>24</sup> Plant, *Modern Political Thought*, ch. 4, provides a philosophical background to utilitarianism, and Rawls' reaction to it is discussed by Kymlicka, *Contemporary Political Philosophy*, ch. 2.

<sup>25</sup> Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, pp. 329-332. In addition to his disagreement with utilitarianism, Rawls writes in response to the socialist demand for the satisfaction of the material needs which are necessary to realise bourgeois freedom. Bell, *Communitarianism and Its Critics*, pp. 2-3.

### *Political Critique in Rawls and Taylor*

subject, because it determines in part who one is and who one can become.<sup>26</sup> Through political critique, Rawls wishes to establish the subject's inalienable right to be who he is within the basic structure of a constitutional democracy. The primary principle of equal liberty that is central to Rawls' theory of justice as fairness promotes, in the face of moral diversity within a society, a public system of rules which proceduralise intersubjective relations between subjects who possess liberty as a natural right.<sup>27</sup>

Rawls commences with a theoretical conception of the rational subject, whose practical reason enables his capacities for a conception of the good and a sense of justice.<sup>28</sup> Rawlsian man is a quasi-kantian rational autonomous subject, who is already constituted *a priori* to his experiences of things and others.<sup>29</sup> Conveniently, the subject's capacities for the good and justice mirror the liberal's normative preferences for liberty and a theory of distributive justice. Firstly, the subject's capacity to conceive of the good is typically expressed as a rational, deliberative and continuous plan of life, which must be respected and reciprocated by others.<sup>30</sup> Secondly, the subject's capacity for justice denotes something akin to a social consciousness, which makes the subject aware of the socio-economic benefits of society and the duties that are required to maintain them.<sup>31</sup> A subject who shares with others the inherent capacity of practical reason needs little persuasion, therefore, about the benefits of a normative theory of justice that guarantees man's autonomy and provides equality of opportunity to fulfil it.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>26</sup> Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, p. 259. Rawls' basic structure of society refers to the fundamental rights and duties and the division of the advantages that accrue from social co-operation, both of which are distributed by the social institutions found in a property-owning democracy or a liberal socialist regime. In addition, Rawls believes that the basic structure's socio-economic processes that realise justice ought themselves to be surrounded by background politico-legal institutions, which are akin to the democratic government of a self-contained national community. Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, pp. 7-11, pp. 274-284 and p. 457; Rawls, "Preface for the French Edition of *A Theory of Justice*".

<sup>27</sup> Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, pp. 85-90. Sandel captures this point well when he says that, for Rawls, "society, being composed of a plurality of persons, each with his own aims, interests, and conceptions of the good, is best arranged when it is governed by principles that do not themselves presuppose any particular conception of the good ... [so much as] conform to the concept of the right, a moral category given prior to the good and independent of it". Sandel, *Liberalism and the Limits of Justice*, p. 1.

<sup>28</sup> Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, pp. 560-567.

<sup>29</sup> Rawls' quasi-kantianism allows him to substitute the metaphysical status of kantian autonomy with the conditions of human life, whilst Rawls treats Kant's noumenal self, who is motivated by the categorical imperative, as a collective noumenal body that chooses procedural justice. Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, pp. 251-257. On Rawls' relationship to Kant, see Wolff, *Understanding Rawls*, pp. 101ff..

<sup>30</sup> Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, pp. 407-424. The reciprocity of respect accorded to others in virtue of their autonomy is itself a form of ethical justice, which is prior to a procedural theory of justice. Rawls, "Justice as Reciprocity".

<sup>31</sup> Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, ch. VIII, esp. pp. 490-491.

<sup>32</sup> Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, pp. 126-130.



## *Political Critique in Rawls and Taylor*

The methodological vehicle that vindicates Rawls' political critique, and from which the legitimacy of normative justice in politics that watches over power originates, is the method of the social contract that is found in Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau.<sup>33</sup> Based on the assumption of an already existent society that is characterised by moral pluralism, Rawls argues that the kantian congruity between reason and autonomy means that, at the moment of the contract's negotiation, politics is temporarily suspended.<sup>34</sup> In its absence, the political philosopher who is above the immediate concerns and attitudes of the everyday develops a universal perspective, which he puts on the table.<sup>35</sup> Via his conception of the normativity required to demarcate power from the autonomous subject's authentic being, Rawls demonstrates to the contractors how the principles of justice, which are to be established by the contract, mirror the moral doctrines which they already hold.<sup>36</sup> Rawls calls this the state of reflective equilibrium, which is attained by subjects who are competent judges.<sup>37</sup> They are endowed with an ability to adopt the general moral point of view in order to collectively order power via a normative moral doctrine.<sup>38</sup> In this hypothetical position of equality, contractors consent from within a veil of ignorance to a theory of justice as fairness.<sup>39</sup> They choose the fundamental principle of equal liberty, which secures both political and personal justice, or citizenship and autonomy.<sup>40</sup> And, secondly, contractors agree on the subordinate principle of democratic social equality and equality of economic opportunity, which together amount to fairness.<sup>41</sup> In the end, a normative theory of justice that is grounded in practical reason, and which is definitive of man's autonomy, finds support from the free citizen in a well-ordered society.<sup>42</sup>

Despite his efforts to resuscitate political critique, Rawls' political philosophy

<sup>33</sup> Traditionally, the social contract demonstrates the origins and legitimacy of moral and civic background institutions, especially those concerned with political authority, whereas Rawls' constitutional social contract method seeks to justify a political association via furnishing its basic structure with the principle of justice. See Lessnoff, "Introduction"; Boucher and Kelly, "The Social Contract and its critics".

<sup>34</sup> Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, pp. 515-516.

<sup>35</sup> Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, p. 587.

<sup>36</sup> Rawls' archetypal contractor is socially honest, morally altruistic and materially self-interested rather than selfish. Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, pp. 142-150.

<sup>37</sup> Rawls, "Outline of a Decision Procedure for Ethics".

<sup>38</sup> Wolff, *Understanding Rawls*, pp. 60-63.

<sup>39</sup> Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, pp. 48-51 and pp. 136-142.

<sup>40</sup> Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, pp. 243-250 and ch. IV.

<sup>41</sup> Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, pp. 75-83 and ch. V.

<sup>42</sup> Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, pp. 560-561.

### *Political Critique in Rawls and Taylor*

and its basic premise of autonomy are subject to vehement, and at times polemical, criticism from a communitarian perspective which challenges liberalism about its objectivity, normativity and subjectivity. In the appropriate language of Stephen Mulhall and Adam Swift, Rawls' political philosophy raises the questions of subjectivism or objectivism, universalism and anti-perfectionism, and the conception of the person and asocial individualism.<sup>43</sup> Given that, in sections 3.iii. and 3.iv., I examine how the element of objectivity shifts from a metaphysical to a political ground for Rawls in *Political Liberalism*, and how Taylor's early critical thought is defined by an attempt to overcome epistemology, I shine the spotlight here on the communitarian critique of Rawls' de-ontological subjectivity and the normative right with which he imbues state power.<sup>44</sup>

In keeping with the liberal tradition, Rawls' critics argue, he adopts and is the outstanding example of an individualist social ontology.<sup>45</sup> His moral individualism, which derives from the autonomous subject, assumes that only interests matter in normative justice.<sup>46</sup> Rawls' subject's *a priori* capacities for a conception of the good and a sense of justice are tantamount to an unproblematic performance criterion of consciousness.<sup>47</sup> They imply what Sandel notes as an antecedently individuated self.<sup>48</sup> Further, Sandel argues that if practical reason is the faculty by which the self comes by his ends, Rawls can be said to favour a voluntarist rather than cognitive dimension to subjectivity. Essentially, Rawls is less interested in the self's cognitive voyage of discovery than in man's self-interested choice of his ends.<sup>49</sup> With echoes of Hegel's critique of Kant, Sandel calls this Rawls' unencumbered self, who is bifurcated from his substantive experiences.<sup>50</sup> It is a de-ontology with a humane face,<sup>51</sup> which re-iterates the formal, abstract nature of the unmediated subject.<sup>52</sup>

For communitarians, Rawls' unencumbered self and the social contract he signs up to betray political critique that legitimates the formal procedures of normative justice, rather than interpretively analyses its substantive content. Like

<sup>43</sup> Mulhall and Swift, *Liberals and Communitarians*, pp. 9-33. Also, see Frankel Paul et. al., *The Communitarian Challenge to Liberalism*, pp. vii-xiv; Bell, *Communitarianism and Its Critics*, pp. 4-8.

<sup>44</sup> Kymlicka, *Liberalism, Community, and Culture*, pp. 21-23; Plant, *Modern Political Thought*, pp. 25-37.

<sup>45</sup> Ben-Zeev, "Who is a Rational Agent?"; Young, "The Ideal of Community".

<sup>46</sup> Gauthier, "The Liberal Individual"; Gray, *Liberalism*, pp. 45-55; Kukathas and Pettit, *Rawls*, pp. 11-16.

<sup>47</sup> Taylor, "The Concept of a Person", p. 112.

<sup>48</sup> Sandel, *Liberalism and the Limits of Justice*, p. 147.

<sup>49</sup> Sandel, *Liberalism and the Limits of Justice*, pp. 57-60 and pp. 153-159.

<sup>50</sup> Sandel, "The Procedural Republic", p. 87 and p. 93; Plant, *Modern Political Thought*, pp. 339-348.

<sup>51</sup> Sandel, *Liberalism and the Limits of Justice*, pp. 13-14.

<sup>52</sup> Raz, *The Morality of Freedom*, ch. 8 *passim*.

### *Political Critique in Rawls and Taylor*

David Gauthier, who uses the device of the social contract to ground his libertarian theory of justice as mutual advantage,<sup>53</sup> Rawls starts with the individual who employs an analytical method to resolve problems between principles and political practice.<sup>54</sup> Disenchanted with the modern world that has lost its *telos*,<sup>55</sup> his autonomous subject is an article of faith.<sup>56</sup> He is beyond the reach of politics in the fulcrum of the justificatory process,<sup>57</sup> the original position. Of necessity, rawlsian man gives rise to the principle of individual rights, which take primacy over principles of belonging or obligation.<sup>58</sup> A procedural, rights-based politics obviates the needs which are relevant to the substantiation of recognition,<sup>59</sup> whilst it produces intersubjective relations of self-sufficient independence between atomistic selves.<sup>60</sup> Because rawlsian methodological individualism overlooks the rousseauian process of recognition fundamental to autonomy,<sup>61</sup> his political critique furnishes juridical state power with normative right along a “grid that allows self-governing individuals to co-ordinate reciprocal relations in ways that maximise the attainment of their own purposes”.<sup>62</sup>

### **3.iii. The Rational/Reasonable Subject**

If there are academics who are commentators, academics whose lucidity makes them eminent thinkers, and philosophers who happen to be academics, then like Foucault Rawls is the last, and thus unlike Taylor who matches the middle category. The practice of critical thought in Paris and Harvard is a stoical endeavour along a socratic road to the love of wisdom, and in the early 1990s Rawls

<sup>53</sup> Unlike Rawls, Gauthier's subject does not commence from behind the veil of ignorance. Gauthier simply uses the contract method to show how the subject's practical reason effects a capacity for self-interest, which is followed by the logical choice of a theory of justice that upholds self-interestedly advantageous, but rationally constraining, rights. On Gauthier, see Moore, “Gauthier's contractarian morality”; Kymlicka, *Contemporary Political Philosophy*, pp. 125-132; Gaus, *Justificatory Liberalism*, ch. 8.

<sup>54</sup> Barry, *An Introduction to Modern Political Theory*, pp. x-xii.

<sup>55</sup> Sandel, *Liberalism and the Limits of Justice*, pp. 175-178.

<sup>56</sup> Sandel, *Liberalism and the Limits of Justice*, p. 183.

<sup>57</sup> Sandel, *Liberalism and the Limits of Justice*, p. 47 and pp. 62-64.

<sup>58</sup> Taylor, “Atomism”, pp. 30-32.

<sup>59</sup> MacIntyre, “Justice as Virtue”; Buchanan, “Assessing the Communitarian Critique”; Taylor, *The Malaise of Modernity*, pp. 17-18.

<sup>60</sup> Taylor, “Atomism”, pp. 34-43; Gardbaum, “Law, Politics, and the Claims of Community”.

<sup>61</sup> Lukes, *Individualism*, pp. 76ff.; Wolff, *The Poverty of Liberalism*, p. 166.

<sup>62</sup> Beiner, “What Liberalism Means”, p. 191. Similarly, John Dunn argues that the premise of Rawls' social contract method, the voluntary relation between selves, ought not to be the cause of relations in society but the standard these relation should meet. See Dunn, “Contractualism”.

### *Political Critique in Rawls and Taylor*

emerges after a multi-staged trek of two decades with his idea of political liberalism.<sup>63</sup> A normative theory of procedural justice as fairness, he claims, can be understood as a political version of liberalism if it is shorn of its de-ontological meta-ethic.<sup>64</sup> Whilst it is not grounded in the autonomous subject's authentic being, Rawls' political critique still deploys a normative moral doctrine of right to uphold the political liberty possessed *a priori* by man in a moral realm that is distinct from power.

From Rawls post-1970s perspective, the question of moral identity is no longer pivotal to political liberalism for reasons that relate to an earlier theoretical failure. Whilst justice as fairness remains the means to the consistent rawlsian end of a well-ordered society, in *A Theory of Justice* the conception of normativity depends on everyone's endorsement of it as a part of their comprehensive religious, philosophical or moral doctrine.<sup>65</sup> But under conditions of reasonable pluralism and in respect of American constitutional issues in the 1980s, morality can no longer be the basis of legitimacy for normative political justice.<sup>66</sup> As a consequence, Rawls divorces the ethical from the political.<sup>67</sup> Further, in reference to his 1971 mode of theorising, Rawls says that his political philosophy is indistinguishable from moral philosophy and its associated aid of moral reasoning, the social contract.<sup>68</sup>

In his ventures to change his way of looking at things, which culminate in *Political Liberalism*, Rawls discovers that the task of moral philosophy is to elaborate concepts and truths, whilst his new practice of moral theory articulates the doctrines purchased by the subject in the moral sphere. These include comprehensive doctrines like Rawls' own theory of justice, Kant's concept of autonomy, or Mill's idea of individuality.<sup>69</sup> It then falls to the political philosopher's critique to deliver a quasi-hermeneutic understanding of just democratic

<sup>63</sup> Rawls claims that none of his post-*A Theory of Justice* political philosophy is a reply to criticisms made by communitarians. Rawls, *Political Liberalism*, p. xvii, f. 6.

<sup>64</sup> Gutmann, "Communitarian Critics of Liberalism", p. 127.

<sup>65</sup> Rawls, *Political Liberalism*, pp. xv-xvii.

<sup>66</sup> Bellamy argues that because rawlsian, neutralist liberalism has no moral theory, it ought to give up on any moral values. Instead, like Bellamy's own democratic liberalism, it should focus on a political theory of institutions and procedures which can accommodate moral pluralism. Bellamy, *Liberalism and Modern Society*, pp. 219-240.

<sup>67</sup> Rawls seeks to legitimise the conditions of human life that pertain to an industrial democratic society, which one of its standard citizens would choose to legitimate as his theory of justice (instead of the sanction of the collective noumenal body evident in *A Theory of Justice*). Rawls, "Justice as Fairness: Political not Metaphysical". Also, see Kukathas and Pettit, *Rawls*, pp. 121-133.

<sup>68</sup> Rawls, *Political Liberalism*, pp. 36-38.

<sup>69</sup> Rawls, *Political Liberalism*, pp. 195-200.

### *Political Critique in Rawls and Taylor*

institutions in terms of their manifestation of the common elements of moral doctrines. In a stable society of free and equal citizens who are profoundly divided by doctrinal pluralism, people exist side by side vis-à-vis juridical state power because they have jointly rendered it normative.<sup>70</sup>

Rawls introduces the idea of public reason as the normative ground that legitimates political justice. His political critique assumes that, in a society which is characterised by a plurality of incompatible doctrines, everyone adheres to their doctrine reasonably and believes in democratic politics.<sup>71</sup> Out of each subject's formal recognition of another's capacity to form an idea of the good and to embrace a moral doctrine, there comes a demand for the capacity to be constitutionally guaranteed. For Rawls, justice draws the limit and the good shows the point, or the political meets the moral in the overlapping consensus between moral doctrines.<sup>72</sup> That is, public reason enables each citizen to be conscious of justice personally and publicly. Also, because the normativity that arises out of this overlapping consensus is neither dependent upon, nor a product of, the subject's moral doctrines but a consequence of the free reign of public reason in society,<sup>73</sup> Rawls calls it a political and reasonable, rather than metaphysical and true, conception. In keeping the domain of the political distinct from the moral, Rawls' political critique offers a conception of justice to govern state power that he calls political liberalism, which embodies the values that are the very groundwork of existence. Politics in a constitutional regime is consequently a closed domain, where power is exercised coercively, albeit constitutionally, by a corporate body of free and equal citizens over a normatively proceduralised moral sphere.<sup>74</sup>

Accordingly, Rawls has to reformulate his philosophical idea of man through a conception of practical reason that renders the subject an objective political construct.<sup>75</sup> He introduces the political subject or citizen, that democratic idea since

<sup>70</sup> Rawls, *Political Liberalism*, pp. 44-46.

<sup>71</sup> Rawls, *Political Liberalism*, pp. 223-230.

<sup>72</sup> However, Rawls, says that justice does not draw the limit too narrowly. Political liberalism includes some ideas of the good, for example, rationality, primary goods and political virtues. Rawls, *Political Liberalism*, pp. 174ff..

<sup>73</sup> Rawls uses the concept of society in distinction, firstly, to an association, which is an open social system that the subject joins with an already existent identity, and, secondly, a community, which unlike a society is governed by a comprehensive doctrine and thus limits the scope of public reason. Rawls, *Political Liberalism*, pp. 40-42.

<sup>74</sup> Rawls, *Political Liberalism*, pp. 135-139.

<sup>75</sup> Rawls, *Political Liberalism*, pp. 107-110.

### *Political Critique in Rawls and Taylor*

Greek antiquity of a fully co-operating member of society over a complete life,<sup>76</sup> whom he justifies in terms of the freedom between citizens which is grounded on the powers of moral personality. Citizens recognise in each other the ability to act publicly and privately, or an institutional and moral identity, in virtue of the capacity to conceive of the good; secondly, each citizen recognises in himself and others the capacity for a sense of justice that makes them self-authenticating sources of valid claims about political justice; and, thirdly, each citizen is responsible for his conception of the good and the claims he makes about normativity in politics.<sup>77</sup> For Rawls, the citizen acts rationally when he pursues the fruits to be harvested from his capacity for a conception of the good, and the citizen acts reasonably when he acts from the capacity for a sense of justice and establishes a society of mutual co-operation and the rule of law. The rational and the reasonable are thus two distinct conditions of political justice as fairness, and whilst the second element that is reciprocated between citizens cannot be derived from the first, they are complementary in the citizen in a similar manner to Taylor's philosophy of the hermeneutic and expressivist self, which I discuss next.<sup>78</sup>

When the rawlsian citizen employs his intellectual powers of judgement and thought, rational autonomy is in operation.<sup>79</sup> It is applied by the citizen in his social and individual life.<sup>80</sup> But rational autonomy is also the basis of equality and the artifice of reason with which Rawls constructs a political subject, the citizen, in the original position.<sup>81</sup> This same citizen displays full reasonable autonomy, and he publicly recognises and then acts in compliance with the principles of justice in public affairs. Rawls' constructivism in moral theory uses rational autonomy to hypothesise a moral subject, who is connected via an overlapping consensus to the normativity that typifies the relations between citizens with full autonomy in a

<sup>76</sup> The concept of the person is not an account of human nature but a normative conception, which for Rawls' purposes equates to a moral conception of the person. As the basic unit of thought, deliberation and responsibility, this person easily accommodates a political conception of justice. Rawls, "Justice as Fairness: Political not Metaphysical", p. 397, f. 15.

<sup>77</sup> Rawls, *Political Liberalism*, pp. 29-35.

<sup>78</sup> Rawls, *Political Liberalism*, pp. 48-54.

<sup>79</sup> In addition to a reasonable moral psychology, which is a consequence of moral capacities and intellectual powers, Rawls mentions two other features of rational autonomy, the subject's determinate conception of the good interpreted *vis-à-vis* a comprehensive doctrine, and the subject's requisite desire to be normal and co-operative in order to receive recognition as a self-respecting citizen. Rawls, *Political Liberalism*, pp. 81-89.

<sup>80</sup> Rawls, *Political Liberalism*, pp. 77-80.

<sup>81</sup> Rawls, *Political Liberalism*, pp. 72-77.

### *Political Critique in Rawls and Taylor*

well-ordered society.<sup>82</sup> Finally, in political liberalism reasonable autonomy is a political value which is dependent on, but demarcated from, the rational autonomy relevant to the sphere of morality.<sup>83</sup> Rawls, in other words, envisages intersubjective relations between subjects which are regulated socio-economically by equality of opportunity, and politically by constitutional freedoms. Political liberalism secures normative justice in the objective situation of individuals *vis-à-vis* one another.<sup>84</sup>

Nevertheless, Rawls' political liberalism offers a disingenuous revision of *A Theory of Justice*. In the face of a plurality of incompatible moral doctrines, he divorces the moral identity of autonomy from its position as the basis of a theory of normative justice. Yet what he calls political liberalism continues to revolve around the freedom of the autonomous subject.<sup>85</sup> Further, although Rawls discards a metaphysical for a political conception of the subject, the tenability of political liberalism depends on the bifurcated rational-reasonable subject, who is torn between the moral and political. For Rawls, this is justified partly because reason underpins our considered convictions of a normatively well-ordered society,<sup>86</sup> and partly because rationality allows the notion of the free person to decide, be solely responsible for, and at liberty to revise, his fundamental interests and ends.<sup>87</sup>

On this definition, Rawls closely resembles Raz's perfectionist ideal of autonomy, which orders power normatively to sustain self-authored, autonomous lives.<sup>88</sup> Similarly, autonomy implies a notion of equal respect and justifies the fundamental right to political liberty.<sup>89</sup> Autonomy is also crucial to the subject who recognises his motivations as his own, and unrestrained by others takes responsibility for his actions.<sup>90</sup> This subject fashions, through successive decisions, a unified and continuous subjectivity.<sup>91</sup> In liberal political philosophy, where Rawls is the most elegant figure, a deep theory of the self *qua* autonomous chooser is both

<sup>82</sup> Rawls, "Kantian Constructivism in Moral Theory", p. 308; Mulhall and Swift, *Liberals and Communitarians*, pp. 192-205.

<sup>83</sup> Rawls, "The Idea of Public Reason Revisited", p. 586.

<sup>84</sup> Rawls, *Political Liberalism*, pp. 265-271.

<sup>85</sup> Raz, *The Morality of Freedom*, pp. 16-19.

<sup>86</sup> Rawls, "Social Unity and Primary Goods", p. 383.

<sup>87</sup> Rawls, "A Kantian Conception of Equality", pp. 259-260. Relatedly, Gerald Dworkin claims that autonomy is the self's second-order capacity to reflect critically upon his first-order ends, as well as the capacity to accept or change these ends in respect of higher-order preferences. Dworkin, "Autonomy".

<sup>88</sup> Raz, *The Morality of Freedom*, pp. 371-378.

<sup>89</sup> Dworkin, "The Original Position"; Rosenblum, *Another Liberalism*, pp. 69-72.

<sup>90</sup> Dworkin, *The Theory and Practice of Autonomy*, chs. 1-2 *passim*; Archard, "Autonomy, Character and Situation"; Rosenblum, *Another Liberalism*, p. 51.

<sup>91</sup> Raz, *The Morality of Freedom*, p. 154; Barry, *The Liberal Theory of Justice*, pp. 126ff..

the cause and intended consequence of political critique,<sup>92</sup> which grounds the normative regulation of juridical power in the capacities of the subject for private rationality and public reason.

### **3.iv. The Self-Interpreting/Expressivist Subject**

Taylor proposes interpretive political critique as the best way to do critical thought. With this approach, he opposes Rawls, whose legislative political critique promotes normative procedural justice to watch over state power on the basis of, to begin with, the metaphysical subject's *a priori* capacities for the good and a sense of justice, and lately with political liberalism in virtue of the normal political citizen's capacities for rational and reasonable autonomy. Thus, instead of Rawls theoretical explanations of moral doctrines and political justice, Taylor adopts a self-interpreting approach to the language community, in which he finds the moral ontology crucial for recognition. In this respect, he is indebted less to Rousseau's social contract method, which influences Rawls, than to a rousseauian conception of the self-actualisation necessary for the autonomous subject's authentic being. Taylor also works through Hegel's political sense of the recognition afforded by the community, as Hegel is indispensable to any attempt "to gain a conception of man in which free action is the response to what we are".<sup>93</sup> Nonetheless, through his influence by Heidegger's epistemological critique of Rawls' other partner, Kant, and Herder's philosophy of language, Taylor is not a phenomenologist of *Geist* but a post-heideggerian hermeneutist who articulates the hypergoods which are central to an hegelian sense of political liberation.<sup>94</sup> Out of these origins, Taylor fashions political critique on the basis of a philosophical anthropology,<sup>95</sup> which justifies a substantive theory of justice for a normative politics that supports the process of recognition. Consequently, I focus first on Taylor's efforts to overcome epistemology with a philosophical anthropology of the interpretive, expressivist subject.

Since Descartes, Locke and Kant, Taylor says that epistemology has been charged with the validation of claims to truth in the social sciences.<sup>96</sup> To be sure, criticism of foundational epistemology's anthropology dates back to Hegel, and it is

<sup>92</sup> Scanlon, "Rawls' Theory of Justice"; Rosenblum, *Another Liberalism*, p. 52.

<sup>93</sup> Taylor, *Hegel*, p. 571.

<sup>94</sup> Taylor, "Hegel: History and Politics", p. 189.

<sup>95</sup> Taylor, "Introduction", p. 1.

<sup>96</sup> Taylor, "Overcoming Epistemology", pp. 1-6.



### *Political Critique in Rawls and Taylor*

carried forward by Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty. They all reject its associated identity that connotes a disengaged free, rational self, a punctual *a priori* mediated, instrumental self, and a socially atomistic, individualistic self.<sup>97</sup> For Taylor, nevertheless, these philosophers share Kant's epistemological predicament, namely, how to characterise the indispensable condition for there to be experiential awareness in the first place. Rather than re-present the world through the subject's disengaged reason or desire for transcendence, Taylor argues that the conditions for experience can be articulated by reason, which discloses the background where the engaged, being-in-the-world, *Dasein*, is "first and mostly".<sup>98</sup> This enables Taylor to reject punctual identity in favour of identity as depth, whilst Herder's conception of language as the constitutive background of morality sees off atomistic notions of identity.<sup>99</sup> Yet, although he breaks radically from foundationalism, Taylor carries the project of modern, self-responsible reason forward in order to conclude its task of the self-clarification of our nature as knowing selves.<sup>100</sup> Taylor describes this task as the need for self-understanding, or awareness about the limits and conditions of knowing, which requires the articulation of a community's background moral ontology.<sup>101</sup>

The post-heideggerian hermeneutical method that sustains Taylor's political critique originates from his attempt, through a philosophy of language and not an ontology of *Dasein*, to answer the basic ontological question that Heidegger, and more recently, Hans-Georg Gadamer, pose: what exactly is manifest in the language community?<sup>102</sup> In his efforts to get beyond disengaged, punctual and atomistic accounts of identity, Taylor uses a herderian philosophy of language to illuminate the communal background of autonomy.<sup>103</sup> He suggests that the hypergoods contained in the language community – "goods which not only are incomparably more important than others but provide the standpoint from which these must be

<sup>97</sup> Taylor, "Overcoming Epistemology", pp. 7-8.

<sup>98</sup> Taylor, "Lichtung or Lebensform", p. 77.

<sup>99</sup> Taylor, "The Importance of Herder", *passim*.

<sup>100</sup> Taylor, "Overcoming Epistemology", pp. 9-13. For a defence of thin foundationalism, see Gaus, *Justificatory Liberalism*, pp. 91-109.

<sup>101</sup> Taylor, "Overcoming Epistemology", pp. 14-15.

<sup>102</sup> Taylor, "Introduction", p.11.

<sup>103</sup> Taylor talks about language in terms of speech or *energeia*, not work or *ergon*. Language is a pattern of activity that realises man's humanity *qua* a way of being in the world, that of reflective awareness, whilst every speech act expresses and constitutes relations between speakers. For Taylor, the pattern activity of language is employed against a background web that one can never fully dominate, and which exists only because humans speak. Taylor, "Language and Human Nature", pp. 232-234.

### *Political Critique in Rawls and Taylor*

weighed, judged, decided about”<sup>104</sup> – support the self-interpreting self’s attempt to be faithful to something beyond himself, and constitute the expressivist self’s condition for recognition. For Taylor, if man is to know who he is, he must look beyond himself to where he is.<sup>105</sup> Specifically, in contrast to Rawls’ theoretically derived capacities for rational and reasonable autonomy, Taylor’s political critique depends on a phenomenological understanding of the interpretative capacities of the subject and a linguistic account of expressivist self-consciousness.<sup>106</sup>

The embodied subject is engaged with the world, both in virtue of his causal dependency on his body and because his constitutive experience is that of an embodied subject.<sup>107</sup> Bodily self-identity is one aspect of the engaged self, and subsidiary engagement takes place in a world shaped by the embodied experience and thought of man. According to Taylor, a linguistic path characterises the condition of self-interpretation that is necessary for the experience of recognition by the expressivist self. It involves four procedures that organise the human agent, the language user, into a moral agent or self.<sup>108</sup> Firstly, an engaged self is a subject of experience, who imports a language to express the objects of his experience as feelings.<sup>109</sup> Yet, secondly, the expression of certain feelings—shame, guilt, pride, moral remorse or, in short, the life of the subject in the realm of what it is to be human—remain the property of the self, to whom, thirdly, we always refer to for an articulation of these subject-referring feelings. Finally, subsequent to the self’s self-interpretation of those feelings which were first articulated through language, it is possible to know who man is.<sup>110</sup> Because, as a language user, *Verstehen* is the self’s *Seinsmodus*,<sup>111</sup> Taylor speaks of the self as a self-interpreting animal, whose articulated feelings are a central part of his existence and for whom the further articulation of these feelings through language and self-interpretation is a life-time

<sup>104</sup> Taylor, *Sources of the Self*, p. 63.

<sup>105</sup> Taylor, “Heidegger, Language, Ecology”, p. 126.

<sup>106</sup> To note, the interpretive and expressivist self are two sides of the same person. The former is engaged in a monological journey of discovery through self-interpretation within associations like the family. It is then up to the expressivist self to ensure that his subjectivity, which is discovered in self-interpretive monologue, does not become his prison (of the association), and through dialogical recognition the expressivist self is able to go beyond his hermeneutic subjectivity into the language community, where his identity is affirmed. Taylor, “Legitimation Crisis?”, pp. 258-278.

<sup>107</sup> Taylor, “Transcendental Arguments”, *passim*.

<sup>108</sup> Taylor, “Language and Human Nature”, p. 216.

<sup>109</sup> Taylor, “Self-Interpreting Animals”, pp. 48-57.

<sup>110</sup> Taylor, “Self-Interpreting Animals”, pp. 59-62.

<sup>111</sup> Taylor, “Self-Interpreting Animals”, p. 72.

process.<sup>112</sup>

For Taylor, human beings and animals share the common feature of desire, but the fundamental ontology of self-interpretation and the prime capacity of language, which enables the self-evaluation of desire, distinguishes the former from the latter as moral agents.<sup>113</sup> More specifically, the self-evaluations of the expressivist self are definitive of identity when applied to strong evaluations, where the self makes a qualitative distinction between the worth of deep desires and his motivations for them.<sup>114</sup> The self of strong evaluations is capable of an articulate reflection on his deep desires *vis-à-vis* questions about the quality of his life, and the capacity for strong, articulate self-interpretations is essential to any notion of identity.<sup>115</sup> In this way, the strong evaluator carves out the depth of the self, though not from his *de facto* desires but through the relation of his desires to the moral and aesthetic intuitions of the language community, which is a process wherein one draws a moral map of oneself and tries to give shape to one's experience.<sup>116</sup> Because of the crucial feature of the expressivist self's capacity for strong evaluations, the notions of reflection, will and responsibility characterise identity, too.<sup>117</sup> The self's fundamental, deep evaluations are inseparable from him, and he is re-assured of their validity by the language community's moral ontology. These fundamental evaluations, which are the product of the expressivist self's articulations of his sense of worth, and of the self-interpretations of the self that constitute his experience of what matters, make up the identity of the self realised through recognition.<sup>118</sup>

### **3.v. Taylor and the Politics of Recognition**

Taylor's political critique derives from a philosophical anthropology which emphasises the centrality of the language community to the constitution of moral

<sup>112</sup> Taylor, "Self-Interpreting Animals", p. 65.

<sup>113</sup> Identity requires reflexivity for the subject to know what matters to him, and consciousness is essential to reflexivity because it enables things to matter in the first place. In this sense, taylorian consciousness is synonymous with language, for it is language that opens the subject up to the human concerns that matter and constitute identity. Taylor, "The Concept of a Person", pp. 104-105.

<sup>114</sup> The self evaluates weak desires, too, but these are concerned with outcomes, and not the relative worth of, and motivations for, desires. Taylor, "What is Human Agency?", pp. 16-23.

<sup>115</sup> Taylor, "What is Human Agency?", pp. 25-27.

<sup>116</sup> Taylor, "Self-Interpreting Animals", pp. 66-68. The capacity for strong evaluation is the condition for these secondary capacities that are pivotal to identity, namely, the capacity of communication, which relates the self to the language community, and the capacity of responsibility, which the self assumes for his depth. Taylor, "What is Human Agency?", pp. 29-33.

<sup>117</sup> Taylor, "What is Human Agency?", p. 43.

<sup>118</sup> Taylor, "What is Human Agency?", pp. 35-37.

### *Political Critique in Rawls and Taylor*

identity. Language, which translates the norms harboured in the institutions and practices of a community, is the means to self-consciousness of the self-interpreting self, whilst its hypergoods provide the content for the fulfilment of the expressivist self's desire for recognition.<sup>119</sup> As Taylor justifies his philosophical anthropology of the self-interpreting/expressivist subject, "[m]y identity is defined by the commitments and identifications which provide the frame of horizon within which I can try to determine from case to case what is good, or valuable, or what ought to be done, or what I endorse or oppose".<sup>120</sup> Subsequent to his philosophy of the subject, Taylor brings in the question of politics as the protector and promoter of the language community's hypergoods that characterise its background horizon. Further, Taylor's hegelian politics of recognition signals the moral obligations one owes to the community and the duties that are required to realise what one already is.<sup>121</sup> With political critique, Taylor demonstrates why the crucial relation between moral existence and membership of a community necessitates a shift beyond political liberalism,<sup>122</sup> and in this penultimate section of chapter 3 I examine his normative theory of the substantive justice which recognition requires from juridical state power.

If Rawls' two decade trek is a solitary path that circumnavigates the liberal and communitarian debate, Taylor's humanist critical thought with its self-interpreting, expressivist maturity finds its moment of political critique therein. He suggests, for instance, that both ontological and advocacy arguments are at stake in Anglo-American political philosophy.<sup>123</sup> On this basis, it is possible to be, like Taylor, an ontological holist who espouses a basic principle of political liberty, precisely because issues of moral identity and community uphold the dignity of the self.<sup>124</sup> These issues are of concern to all contractors, who choose a conception of substantive justice favourable to the conditions for recognition. What one must realise, Taylor argues, is that the ontologically disinterested liberal's procedural conception of justice is blind to these important questions.<sup>125</sup> Instead of the liberal's

<sup>119</sup> Taylor, "Hegel: History and Politics", p. 184.

<sup>120</sup> Taylor, *Sources of the Self*, p. 27.

<sup>121</sup> Taylor, "Hegel: History and Politics", p. 177.

<sup>122</sup> Taylor, "Hegel: History and Politics", pp. 179-180.

<sup>123</sup> Ontological issues account for the self, and advocacy issues concern the conception of justice one supports, and whilst the first is implicit in the latter, it need not determine one's theory of justice. Taylor, "Cross-Purposes", pp. 160-162.

<sup>124</sup> Taylor, "The Nature and Scope of Distributive Justice", pp. 308-312.

<sup>125</sup> Taylor, "Cross-Purposes", pp. 163-164.

### *Political Critique in Rawls and Taylor*

representation view of autonomy, which emphasises radical choice, Taylor talks of the significance view of the person.<sup>126</sup> It is because the language community's hypergoods are constitutive of what matters to the self-interpreting self that it ought to take centre stage in any discussion about justice, and it is because one attributes significant purposes to the expressivist self, whose identity embodies a unique point of view in the world, that autonomy should be valued.<sup>127</sup>

Rather than the atomistic autonomy associated with the rawlsian citizen's capacity for rational and reasonable conceptions of the good and justice, Taylor's idea of autonomy is that of an ethic of authenticity. In *Sources of the Self*, he highlights its origins—commercial, bourgeois activity; the narrative novel; the privacy of marriage; and the emotional sentiments of love, concern and affection—from early eighteenth century European society.<sup>128</sup> Parallel to the evolution of the ethic of authenticity, Taylor talks of the rise of a critical public sphere, in which authenticity can be cultivated by the self-interpreting self.<sup>129</sup> He also speaks of the political case authenticity makes for a distinct civil society, where the expressivist self articulates his strong desires free from the interference of others and the state.<sup>130</sup> Taylor's point is that the ethic of authenticity is an individualised identity that is personally constituted in respect of a communal moral ontology. As such, this authentic identity forms the basis of a theory of substantive justice that promotes a hypergood such as political liberty, which also allows Taylor to avoid the unencumbered self's demand for proceduralised normative right. As with Hegel's concretisation of *Moralität* with *Sittlichkeit*, Taylor says that without substantive hypergoods as the basis for normative justice, a procedural political liberalism does no more than encourage individuals to "strike out on their own and define their identity as individuals. Individualism comes ... when men cease to identify with the community's life".<sup>131</sup>

In a modern society no longer based on the principle of honour and an inequality of status, the dignity fostered by Taylor's ethic of authenticity and

<sup>126</sup> Taylor, "The Concept of a Person", pp. 113-114. Only the representation view of the person pretends to an absolute understanding of the self, whereas the self whose core identity depends on the capacity for self-interpretation always retains a subjective element to his depth. He can only be understood through an account of the language community, out of which depth is formed and recognition realised. Taylor, "Introduction", p. 3.

<sup>127</sup> Taylor, "The Concept of a Person", pp. 99-101.

<sup>128</sup> Taylor, *Sources of the Self*, pp. 285-294.

<sup>129</sup> Taylor, "Liberal Politics and the Public Sphere", pp. 257-287.

<sup>130</sup> Taylor, "Invoking Civil Society".

<sup>131</sup> Taylor, "Hegel: History and Politics", pp. 186-187.

### *Political Critique in Rawls and Taylor*

presupposed by the processes of recognition translates into a political principle of equal respect.<sup>132</sup> Taylor calls it a politics of recognition, which he contrasts with a rawlsian politics of universalism, as well as with a politics of difference.<sup>133</sup> On the proviso that certain basic rights are enshrined in a constitution, a politics of recognition acknowledges the normative significance of the hypergoods to the constitution of moral identity.<sup>134</sup> In particular, a community's moral ontology is crucial to the self-actualisation of the autonomous subject's authentic being. Identity is only realised in relation to the public life of the community, and not through the private self-definition of the alienated individual.<sup>135</sup> The ethic of authenticity, which dignifies the self-interpreting and expressivist self, is the justification for the principle of equal respect, whilst it also politicises recognition in terms of the substantive justice that normatively administers juridical power.<sup>136</sup> In fact, political critique that fails to harness normativity to the juridical state via politics denies the self a sense of who he is,<sup>137</sup> because, as Taylor argues,

when we think of a human being, we do not simply mean a living organism, but a being who can think, feel, decide, be moved, respond, enter into relations with others; and all this implies a language, a related set of ways of experiencing the world, of interpreting his feelings, understanding his relation to others, to the past, the future, the absolute, and so on. It is the particular way he situates himself within this cultural world that we call his identity.<sup>138</sup>

### **3.vi. Humanist Critical Thought's Path to Enlightenment**

I have argued above that, as the descendants of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century German philosophy of Kant and Hegel, Rawls and Taylor exemplify how contemporary Anglo-American political philosophy continues to follow a humanist path to enlightenment. It proceeds with the twin components of critical thought, critique and maturity, via a philosophy of the subject's capacity for

<sup>132</sup> Taylor, "The Politics of Recognition", pp. 25-32.

<sup>133</sup> A politics of universalism advocates procedural justice, in which a principle of equal liberty values the capacity to be autonomous, but not the self's actual autonomy because it is neutral about the hypergoods necessary for identity. With a politics of difference, a principle of universal equality informs justice as an instrument to recognise identity, as it is different rather than the product of a fundamental human capacity. Taylor, "The Politics of Recognition", pp. 37-44.

<sup>134</sup> Taylor, "The Politics of Recognition", pp. 56-61.

<sup>135</sup> Taylor, "Hegel: History and Politics", p. 188.

<sup>136</sup> Taylor, "The Politics of Recognition", pp. 32-37.

<sup>137</sup> Taylor, "The Politics of Recognition", p. 64.

<sup>138</sup> Taylor, "Hegel: History and Politics", p. 182.

### *Political Critique in Rawls and Taylor*

transcendental apperception or for the transcendental dialectic, which then prompts the epistemological critique of Kant and Hegel. Or, where Rawls and Taylor are concerned, political critique operates on the basis of a theory of the subject's rational/reasonable autonomy or a philosophical anthropology of the self-interpreting/expressivist subject. As a result, humanism's objective and normative experience fosters a state of being autonomous in thought and action that equates to autonomy and political liberty from juridical state power, hence *Moralität* and political liberalism, or recognition and political liberation realised through it, whence *Sittlichkeit* and a politics of recognition.

Before I turn to chapters 4, 5 and 6, in which I will develop Foucault's nietzschean path to enlightenment where critique gives shape to maturity, I suggest in this last section of chapter 3 that Rawls' and Taylor's approach to critical thought serves as a template for many of their colleagues, whether liberals, communitarians, multiculturalists or civic and liberal nationalists. In the end, however, and like the progenitors and current practitioners of humanism's path, their critique depends on a philosophy of the subject. It enlightens a mature practice for the normalised only, who accord with this philosophy, which is at the expense of those who do not.

As it is fruitful to frame Rawls and Taylor against a liberal and communitarian background, it can be noted that the substantive justice and process of recognition which Taylor and other communitarians advocate,<sup>139</sup> for example, Walzer's spheres of justice within a distributive community of social goods,<sup>140</sup> or MacIntyre's narrative account of identity,<sup>141</sup> draw a response from liberals that equals the vociferousness of the communitarian criticism of Rawls' procedural justice for an unencumbered self. In the main, the limited worth of autonomy is taken on board by liberals,<sup>142</sup> who direct concern at the exact normative status of hypergoods, in as much as they are deeply embedded in the traditions of civic republicanism and paternalistic communities.<sup>143</sup> Typically, communitarians suffer historical amnesia and lapse into republican revisionism.<sup>144</sup> They promote the

<sup>139</sup> On communitarian justice, see Bell, *Communitarianism and Its Critics*, Acts III, IV and V; Oakeshott, "Political Education".

<sup>140</sup> Walzer, *Spheres of Justice*, pp. 7-29. For an account of Walzer's primary social good, the monopoly of local power in the political community, and his more pertinent social goods relevant to justice of need, desert and the family, see Walzer, *Spheres of Justice*, chs. 2-4 and ch. 9, respectively.

<sup>141</sup> MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, pp. 201-209; MacIntyre, "The Virtues", p. 127.

<sup>142</sup> Mulhall and Swift, *Liberals and Communitarians*, p. 164.

<sup>143</sup> Badhwar, "Moral Agency, Commitment, and Impartiality", pp. 1-2; Waldron, "Particular Values and Critical Morality"; Dworkin, "Liberal Community".

<sup>144</sup> Herzog, "Some Questions for Republicans".

### *Political Critique in Rawls and Taylor*

hypergoods of a fraternity of men,<sup>145</sup> which is implicit in Taylor's nostalgia for the maritime village,<sup>146</sup> MacIntyre's version of the aristotelian *polis*,<sup>147</sup> and Sandel's support of the jeffersonian town council.<sup>148</sup> Despite their deliberately sanitised, holistic conceptions of community,<sup>149</sup> benevolence and fraternity cannot be the source of substantive normativity. As Amy Gutmann says, it is simply not possible to live in Salem without the witches.<sup>150</sup>

However, and despite the minority who argue liberalism is either a victim of its own success,<sup>151</sup> or of the success of communitarianism,<sup>152</sup> the liberal and communitarian debate ultimately affirms the prevalence in Anglo-American political philosophy of humanist critical thought. *A propos* of a conception of freedom that I characterise as embedded individuality, there is a *rapprochement* of normative justice, which if not of convergence as some believe,<sup>153</sup> is tilted in favour of a liberal or communitarian politics.<sup>154</sup> It mixes the right with the good, justice with virtue.<sup>155</sup> Communitarian liberals move away from pure procedural justice to honour the role of the language community in the process of recognition,<sup>156</sup> whilst liberal communitarians dilute their substantive justice in acknowledgement of the political liberty necessary for autonomy.<sup>157</sup> The normative distinction is now between the definition of the subject's interests – a question of the political right to decide the good – and the principles of justice, which stem from the assumption that each subject's interests matter equally and so demand socio-economic rights.<sup>158</sup>

<sup>145</sup> Pateman, "'God Hath Ordained to Man a Helper'"; Okin, *Justice, Gender and the Family*, ch. 3; Sypnowich, "Justice, Community, and the Antinomies of Feminist Theory".

<sup>146</sup> Taylor, *Sources of the Self*, pp. 314-317.

<sup>147</sup> MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, ch. 11.

<sup>148</sup> Sandel, "The Procedural Republic".

<sup>149</sup> Holmes, "The Permanent Structure of Antiliberal Thought", pp. 227-229.

<sup>150</sup> Gutmann, "Communitarian Critics of Liberalism", pp. 129-133.

<sup>151</sup> Spragens, "Communitarian Liberalism", pp. 39-43; Richardson, "The Problem of Liberalism".

<sup>152</sup> Bellah, "Community Properly Understood"; Conner, "Finding a Place for Community".

<sup>153</sup> Buchanan, "Assessing the Communitarian Critique"; Macedo, "Community, Diversity, and Civic Education", p. 241.

<sup>154</sup> Caney, "Liberalism and Communitarianism: A Misconceived Debate" (but see Mulhall and Swift, "Liberals and Communitarians: whose Misconception?", who contest Caney's liberal politics); Walzer, "The Communitarian Critique of Liberalism".

<sup>155</sup> O'Neill, *Towards Justice and Virtue*; Slote, *From Morality to Virtue*; Gutmann, "The Virtues of Democratic Self-Constraint".

<sup>156</sup> Dworkin, "Liberal Community"; Elshtain, "The Communitarian Individual"; Selznick, "Foundations of Communitarian Liberalism".

<sup>157</sup> Badhwar, "Moral Agency, Commitment, and Impartiality"; Conway, "Capitalism and Community"; Kukathas, "Liberalism, Communitarianism, and Political Community".

<sup>158</sup> Kymlicka, *Liberalism, Community, and Culture*, pp. 21-43.



### *Political Critique in Rawls and Taylor*

In short, autonomy is embedded in the language community that is central to recognition.<sup>159</sup> The moral identity of embedded individuality implores political critique which proposes normative justice that provides for, but enables the self to constitute, identity.

In support of multiculturalism, for example, Kymlicka alludes to the political community of Canada, which encapsulates a heritage comprised of several cultural narratives. Through linguistic and historical processes, the self becomes aware of his identity as a member of a cultural narrative, which is the precondition for intelligent choices about how to lead one's life.<sup>160</sup> Although Kymlicka is close to Taylor's self-interpreting self here, he argues that cultural narratives ought to be normatively embodied as substantive justice in the juridical state because they are the condition for the self-actualisation of autonomy.<sup>161</sup> Hypergoods such as memories, values and common institutions form the groundwork or context of choice only.<sup>162</sup> Kymlicka values the context provided by cultural narratives simply as a means for the self-interpreting subject to attain self-consciousness *qua* autonomy, and only a rawlsian inspired procedural justice guarantees the right to accept, reject or revise the ways of life implicit in the numerous cultural narratives of a political community.<sup>163</sup>

Embedded individuality features in current debates over the post-sovereign state,<sup>164</sup> too, especially attempts to develop a form of civic nationalism that is relevant to multi-national states.<sup>165</sup> Civic nationalists such as Neil MacCormick, for instance, propose a conception of substantive justice in which the subject is situated in socio-politico-legal institutions, for it is here that the subject comes to know his political identity through a process of collective self-determination.<sup>166</sup> At the same time, because procedural justice underlies the subject's autonomy, civic nationalism is also conducive to individual self-realisation outwith a quasi-social democratic politics.<sup>167</sup>

In much the same way, liberal nationalism envisages a theory of substantio-

<sup>159</sup> Selznick, "Personhood", p. 125; Bevir, "The Individual and Society", pp. 103-105.

<sup>160</sup> Kymlicka, *Liberalism, Community and Culture*, pp. 164-168.

<sup>161</sup> Kymlicka, *Liberalism, Community and Culture*, pp. 172-178.

<sup>162</sup> Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship*, pp. 76-82.

<sup>163</sup> Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship*, pp. 82-84 and pp. 91-93.

<sup>164</sup> MacCormick, "Liberalism, Nationalism and the Post-sovereign State", pp. 561-563.

<sup>165</sup> MacCormick, "What Place for Nationalism in the Modern World?", pp. 87-93.

<sup>166</sup> MacCormick, "What Place for Nationalism in the Modern World?", pp. 83-86.

<sup>167</sup> MacCormick, "What Place for Nationalism in the Modern World?", pp. 80-82.

### *Political Critique in Rawls and Taylor*

procedural justice, which is based on associative obligations Liberal nationalists embrace both universalism and individualism.<sup>168</sup> For Yael Tamir, the institutions that encapsulate the subject's associative obligations are constitutive of political identity, which approximates to a voluntaristic political affiliation, whilst the subject's moral identity is constituted in a plural cultural context.<sup>169</sup> In either moment, Tamir's embedded subject's political and moral identity is defined by self-authorship, which as for MacCormick is a form of autonomy *qua* individuality that generates identity.<sup>170</sup> Tamir calls this the contextual individual, who albeit always free within a context, is never context-free.<sup>171</sup> Perhaps, with regard to Anglo-American political philosophy's normative *rapprochement* around substantive-procedural justice, MacCormick sums up best the embedded individuality on which political critique turns. He says that:

[p]eople acquire character and self-consciousness, and a capacity for self-command, only in a specific social setting. An axiological individualism that treats individuality as a value, ... stipulates indeed that social contexts favourable to the developing of autonomous selves have fundamental value morally and politically.<sup>172</sup>

### vii. Synopsis

In summary, I have concentrated in this and the previous chapter on stalwart humanist critical thinkers—Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau; Kant and Hegel; as well as Rawls and Taylor—and I have described their practice of critical thought. I have argued that, because they engage in critique subsequent to, and based on the foundation of, a philosophy of the subject *qua* man, they personify a humanist path to enlightenment. To be specific, the autonomous subject who knows and desires recognition is re-assured of his maturity through epistemological critique. It advances man's objective experience of the world, whether as an apparent or real knowledge of things. Similarly, the rational and reasonable subject, whose self-actualisation is a self-interpretive, expressive process, is guaranteed a state of being autonomous in thought and action by political critique, which secures man's normative experience *vis-à-vis* the juridical state, whether through procedural or

<sup>168</sup> Tamir, *Liberal Nationalism*, pp. 95-102.

<sup>169</sup> Tamir, *Liberal Nationalism*, pp. 20-25.

<sup>170</sup> Tamir, *Liberal Nationalism*, pp. 25-34.

<sup>171</sup> Tamir, *Liberal Nationalism*, p. 14.

<sup>172</sup> MacCormick, "Liberalism, Nationalism and the Post-sovereign State", p. 564.

### *Political Critique in Rawls and Taylor*

substantive justice that orders power. Indeed, as I have suggested at the end of chapter 2 and a moment ago here in chapter 3, Hegel's scientific philosophy of *Geist* corroborates Kant's critical philosophy of *Aufklärung* via the consolidation of *Moralität's* formal abstractness in *Sittlichkeit's* customs and practices, whilst Taylor's politics of recognition accommodates the procedural right to political liberty of Rawls' political liberalism, as well as the substantive hypergoods necessary for political liberation. This trend is then followed by other Anglo-American political philosophers, for example, Kymlicka, MacCormick and Tamir, whose political critique assumes that the subject's autonomously generated individuality is as important as the embedded context essential to recognition.

In broad terms, along the path to enlightenment that is defined by critique *a propos* of a philosophy of the subject, critical thought is caught in a humanistic circle. Inevitably, it returns to its ontological origin, namely, Rousseau's authentic autonomy of self-love that is actualised through the recognition produced by the joint constitution of the *volonté générale*. Hence, in the remainder of the dissertation, I will illustrate why Foucault's nietzschean path to enlightenment rejects this humanistic circle, and how he overcomes it to practice critical thought that manifests maturity after critique.

## 4

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# *An Archæology of Objectivity and Savoir*

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In this chapter and the two which follow, I intend to demonstrate why Foucault is a skeptic about the path to enlightenment that is taken by Kant, Hegel, Rawls and Taylor, who from the evidence in chapters 2 and 3 are imprisoned in a humanistic circle. Foucault's skepticism, which is manifested as a critical history of the objective, normative and subjective axes of the experience that determines who we are, is instead elaborated along a nietzschean path to enlightenment. From here, an appropriate notion of maturity is only formulated once critique has elucidated finitude.

I shall discuss Foucault's conception of freedom, which is developed through critical ontology, in chapter 7, the conclusion. Prior to that, I will outline in chapter 6 Foucault's critical historical critique of subjectivity, which shows humanism's immaturity in terms of the submission of autonomy and recognition by political rationality. I will also detail his conception of the nature of *pouvoir* and his account of ancient practices of the self, which he employs to re-articulate maturity as an agonistic ethical subjectivity. Lastly, in chapter 5 I will cover Foucault's genealogical critique of normativity. Together with his reconception of how *pouvoir/savoir* is exercised by mechanisms of discipline and regulation, it reveals "the way in which a culture can determine in a massive, general form the difference that limits it",<sup>1</sup> namely, the costs of humanism's normativity of confined exclusion and normalisation.

Before this, I look here in chapter 4 at Foucault's archæological critique of objectivity and *savoir*, which the humanist views as the source of objective *connaissance*. To begin with, I trace the introduction of Kant and Hegel to French philosophy and the connotations this has for both the Dreyfus Affair and the existential and marxist interpretations of Hegel by Alexandre Kojève and Jean

<sup>1</sup> Foucault, *The Order of Things*, p. xxiv.

## *An Archæology of Objectivity and Savoir*

Hyppolite, who outline a transcendental subject of empirical *connaissance* as the basis for critique. I then illustrate why this diachronic, formal *a priori* for *connaissance*, man, who grounds the thought at the heart of the human sciences, is rejected by Foucault. In respect of the goal of kantian maturity that *connaissance* is designed to realise, his archæology confirms the limited extent to which, under humanism, the human sciences teach one how to think and act freely. Subsequent to an examination of Foucault's nominalist archæological method, I show that in *The Order of Things* he observes "how a culture experiences the propinquity of things, ... establishes the *tabula* of their relationships and the order by which they must be considered".<sup>2</sup> Archæology erases the kantian and hegelian subject of epistemological critique, whose sameness fosters humanism's objective experience of things, and in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* Foucault proposes that *savoir* holds the key to *connaissance* in the human sciences.

Nonetheless, in his retrieval of Kant's *philosophische Archäologie*, which Foucault uses to re-orient critical thought via philology's theory of language—whence an objective *connaissance* in the counter-human sciences of psychoanalysis and ethnology—he runs up against the events of May 1968. In response to the need for more concrete *engagement* with extra-juridical power, I suggest that Foucault situates an analysis of *savoir* within a genealogical critique of *pouvoir*. He maintains that objectivity is a function of normative right, which in turn is explained by the might effected by non-discursive relations of force<sup>3</sup> and domination.<sup>4</sup> I thus close chapter 4 with an analysis of the interrelationship between archæology and genealogy, which is a prelude to my discussion of Foucault's genealogical critique in chapter 5.

### **4.i. Kant and Hegel in French Philosophy**

As a general rule, nineteenth century French philosophy does not threaten the juridical state. When it does, philosophers are simply co-opted by the July monarchy (1830-1848) or neutralised by the second empire in the 1850s.<sup>5</sup> The sporadic political effectiveness of philosophy—the June days of 1848 or the Paris

<sup>2</sup> Foucault, *The Order of Things*, p. xxiv.

<sup>3</sup> Foucault speaks generally about the relation of force (*rapport de force*) and specifically about the relation of forces (*rapport de forces*). For convenience, in the discussion that follows I use the general idea of the relation of force. Cf. Foucault, "Cours du 4 février 1976", p. 79; Foucault, "À quoi rêvent les philosophes?", p. 706.

<sup>4</sup> I employ the concept of domination throughout the analysis as a compression of the relations of domination (*rapports de domination*). See, for example, Foucault, "Cours du 14 janvier 1976", p. 24.

<sup>5</sup> Hazareesingh, *Intellectuals and the French Communist Party*, pp. 34-39.

## *An Archæology of Objectivity and Savoir*

commune in 1871 – only proves the maxim that, between Napoleon’s rise to power in 1799 and the Dreyfus Affair in 1898, epistemological rather than political questions are predominant in French philosophy. Although this cannot be explained by the infiltration of Kant and Hegel into post-revolutionary France, their arrival does coincide with the removal from politics of the eighteenth century *engagé philosophe*, who is institutionalised in the university. He only crosses back to the streets at the start of the twentieth century; that is, once the critical conservatism of the university philosopher is rejected by the intelligentsia, the latter’s agent of political critique, the intellectual, is born. Hereafter, in the 1930s, Kojève’s and Hyppolite’s existential and marxist rendition of Hegel is attached to kantian transcendental subjectivity by the intellectual, which results in an epistemological ground of anthropocentric dialectical history in the human sciences. It fuels Foucault’s archæological critique of the kantian-hegelian subject of objective experience. For these reasons, I describe in this section the place of Kant and Hegel in French philosophy, as well as its tradition of *engagement* which, as I will show in chapter 7, Foucault redefines and upholds.

Nineteenth century lockean empirical positivism is bolstered by the introduction to France in the 1850s of Kant’s transcendental idealism.<sup>6</sup> In parallel, as French philosophers struggle to grasp the politically charged philosophy that lurks within Hegel’s German texts, positivism in France is aided by the subterranean arrival of his absolute idealism.<sup>7</sup> The spread of Hegel’s ideas depends on the word of *émigrés* in Paris like Marx and Friedrich Engels, or on French philosophers who attend Hegel’s lectures in Berlin.<sup>8</sup> Yet, with the advent of the second republic in 1848 and the second empire in 1852, Kant’s advocates, together with the catholic scholars who adhere to christian ontology, tarnish Hegel with political radicalism and atheism outside Prussia, as well as with conservatism inside it, which leads to a purge of his followers from the *Collège de France*.<sup>9</sup> Nevertheless, a kantian transcendental subject and an hegelian dialectical history continue to inform positivism, which is the dominant epistemology in France until the middle of the third republic (1870-1940).<sup>10</sup> At this point, it is possible to discern the emergence of what Colin Smith calls the experience of *écart*,<sup>11</sup> which eventually defines the

<sup>6</sup> Benrubi, *La Philosophie Contemporaine en France*, pp. 286-296.

<sup>7</sup> Kelly, *Hegel in France*, p. 3.

<sup>8</sup> Kelly, *Hegel in France*, pp. 11-18.

<sup>9</sup> Kelly, *Hegel in France*, pp. 19-25.

<sup>10</sup> Clark, *The Foundations of Structuralism*, pp. 9-16; Poster, *Existential Marxism*, pp. 113-114.

<sup>11</sup> Smith, *Contemporary French Philosophy*, pp. 9-19 and pp. 249-253.

## *An Archæology of Objectivity and Savoir*

projects of, amongst others, Sartre and Merleau-Ponty. Albert Camus defines it as absurdity,<sup>12</sup> and *écart* signals something akin to Hegel's understanding of Kant's bifurcated subject, who dirempted from things he knows only as they appear, motivates Hegel's desire to reconcile them through an idealisation of the world. Consequently, there is a shift in philosophical focus from Kant's conditions, to Hegel's certitude, of knowing to known, and Isaac Benrubi confirms the attachment of an hegelian phenomenology to a kantian transcendental subject.<sup>13</sup> He claims that there is a "joint effort, intentional or otherwise, amongst philosophers to conceive from out of the depths of consciousness a *sui generis* knowledge of the world, which can lend an ever deeper understanding to existence".<sup>14</sup>

It is in respect of an epistemological critique grounded in man that Nietzsche damns the nineteenth century as the decadent age.<sup>15</sup> He scorns the philosopher's *ressentiment* of the world, which is evident in a psychology of metaphysics that blindly trusts in reason to reveal being-in-itself and a world free of contradiction.<sup>16</sup> For Nietzsche, university philosophers are servile to the state in virtue of their institutionalised position,<sup>17</sup> and he claims that they will soon fall asleep.<sup>18</sup> And, by critical consent, the Dreyfus Affair in 1898 bears out Nietzsche's prophesy in France as the philosopher's epistemological critique is directed at politics by his dissatisfied colleagues, who become intellectuals. The result is that, by the 1930s, there is an indissociable practico-political dimension to French philosophy.<sup>19</sup>

A detailed review of the Dreyfus Affair need not detain the argument. Suffice to say that Alfred Dreyfus, a jew from Alsace who is a captain in the French army, is framed in 1894 as a German spy by an anti-semitic, patriotic Parisian establishment.<sup>20</sup> Imprisoned on Devil's Island off the coast of present day French Guyana, Dreyfus' plight attracts the sympathies of those philosophers who, like Rousseau and Voltaire before them, work outside the university.<sup>21</sup> In January 1898,

<sup>12</sup> Chiari, *Twentieth-Century French Thought*, pp. 68-76.

<sup>13</sup> Chiari, *Twentieth-Century French Thought*, pp. 60-63.

<sup>14</sup> "[Il y a] une collaboration, consciente ou non, à l'œuvre de réalisation spontanée de conceptions de vie *sui generis* surgissant des profondeurs de l'être et par conséquent d'une intériorisation progressive de l'existence". Benrubi, *La Philosophie Contemporaine en France*, p. 1037.

<sup>15</sup> Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, §§ 40-44, pp. 25-27.

<sup>16</sup> Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, § 579, pp. 310-311.

<sup>17</sup> Kaufmann, *Nietzsche*, pp. 107-110.

<sup>18</sup> Nietzsche, *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, pp. 28-31.

<sup>19</sup> Montefiore, "Introduction", pp. xix-xxiv.

<sup>20</sup> "Zola's 100-year-old message given a modern slant", in *The Scotsman*, 14 January 1998.

<sup>21</sup> "France tries to revive fading spirit of Zola", in *The Guardian*, 13 January 1998.

## *An Archaeology of Objectivity and Savoir*

to the consternation of the catholic and nationalist press,<sup>22</sup> Émile Zola brings the injustice against Dreyfus to the attention of the French president in a public letter — *Lettre à Monsieur Félix Faure, président de la République*<sup>23</sup> — the subtitle of which, *J'accuse!*, becomes the most celebrated of newspaper headlines.<sup>24</sup> Ironically, it takes a protest against Zola, which is authored by the university philosophers in the *Revue Blanche*, to label the *philosophe's* twentieth century heir an *intellectuel*, and an article by Maurice Barrés, *La protestation des intellectuels!*, before the intellectual becomes a recognised figure.

The point is that 1898 encapsulates a crisis of political representation in France. Despite the rise of an educated intelligentsia in the nineteenth century, the *haute bourgeoisie* maintain their pre-eminence in the military, civil and political spheres.<sup>25</sup> Further, because of politico-cultural centralisation in Paris since the twelfth century and the radicalisation of political experience after 1789,<sup>26</sup> the French intelligentsia thrives on political critique.<sup>27</sup> With the spokesman for the *haute bourgeoisie* in the university lost for words by the Dreyfus Affair, a critical vacuum arises which the intelligentsia fill with their own representative, the intellectual.<sup>28</sup> Amongst others, Sudhir Hazareesingh mentions the philosophical ascendancy of the republican intellectual over the conservative philosopher.<sup>29</sup> For the conservative, the intellectual's *engagement* transforms him into the spiritual militia man who, because he conflates morality and politics,<sup>30</sup> fuels Julien Benda's charge of the intellectual's treason against his duty to truth.<sup>31</sup> Yet, from the intellectual's viewpoint, 1898 presents the opportunity to practice political critique on behalf of the reign of reason and democratic government.<sup>32</sup> Based on his rejuvenation of the *philosophe's* tradition of *engagement*,<sup>33</sup> the intellectual communicates his universalist

<sup>22</sup> "Belated pat on the back for Zola", in *The Financial Times*, 10-11 January 1998.

<sup>23</sup> Ory and Sirinelli, *Les Intellectuels en France*, pp. 5-6.

<sup>24</sup> "Dreyfus: the name of our century", in *The Independent on Sunday*, 11 January 1998.

<sup>25</sup> Charle, *Naissance des 'intellectuels' 1880-1900*, pp. 57-64.

<sup>26</sup> Hazareesingh, *Intellectuals and the French Communist Party*, pp. 25-28.

<sup>27</sup> Ory and Sirinelli, *Les Intellectuels en France*, pp. 11-12.

<sup>28</sup> For an extended discussion of the socio-political birth of the intellectual in the nineteenth century, see Brym, *Intellectuals and Politics*, pp. 1-12; Feuer, "What is an Intellectual?"; Hamlyn, *Being a Philosopher*, pp. 75-124; Shils, "The Traditions of Intellectual Life".

<sup>29</sup> Hazareesingh, *Intellectuals and the French Communist Party*, pp. 44-47; Jennings, "Introduction: Mandarins and Samurais", pp. 13-15.

<sup>30</sup> Benda, *The Treason of the Intellectuals*, pp. 54-57.

<sup>31</sup> Benda, *The Treason of the Intellectuals*, pp. 67-77.

<sup>32</sup> Noack, *Die Intellektuellen*, p. 10; Hazareesingh, *Intellectuals and the French Communist Party*, pp. 49-54.

<sup>33</sup> Gauchet and Westerwelle, "Für eine historisch wahre Geschichte des Subjects", p. 669.



### *An Archaeology of Objectivity and Savoir*

ideas through political networks, petitions, essays and articles,<sup>34</sup> and he assumes a “socio-professional identity ... [as] a thinker, producer of culture, adviser to the prince, and political activist”.<sup>35</sup>

To a large extent, both Kant and Hegel inform the epistemology behind the intellectual’s political critique.<sup>36</sup> Indeed, from the 1930s it is plausible to characterise the critical thought that defines the French path to enlightenment as humanist, for objective experience is grounded in the kantian subject’s transcendental apperception and the hegelian subject’s transcendental dialectic, whilst normative experience is mediated by an existential and marxist reading of Hegel’s lord-bondsman relation. In this respect, the influence of Kant and Hegel in the twentieth century can be gleaned from whom the French philosophical establishment deem to be important. Almost without exception, its members are located at several prestigious institutions in Paris, if not the fifth and sixth *arrondissements*, which include the *grandes écoles* like the *École Normale Supérieure*, the *grands établissements*, for example, the *Collège de France* or the *École des hautes études en sciences sociales*, and the *Université de Paris*. The *jury d’agrégation* and its president at the *École Normale* largely decide which philosophers are to be taught and read in France,<sup>37</sup> and who one has to know in order to make a profession of philosophy and a professor of the philosopher.<sup>38</sup> During the third republic, for instance, Kant’s transcendental idealism predominates thanks to the kantian president of the *jury d’agrégation*, Léon Brunschvicg.<sup>39</sup> Although the tide turns in favour of Hegel in the 1930s, and finally reaches its high mark in 1954 when Hyppolite is appointed director of the *École Normale*, Plato, Descartes and Kant still feature prominently in French philosophy due to the influence of Brunschvicg.<sup>40</sup>

The traitorous philosophers, who through the Dreyfus Affair become intellectuals, are a prelude to the ascendancy within the French philosophical establishment of Hegel. He is one of the three H’s—Edmund Husserl and Heidegger are the other two—taught between 1930 and 1960.<sup>41</sup> Out of the three, Heidegger is an important influence on Foucault’s archaeology of *savoir*. For his

<sup>34</sup> Ory and Sirinelli, *Les Intellectuels en France*, p. 9.

<sup>35</sup> Hazareesingh, *Intellectuals and the French Communist Party*, p. 55.

<sup>36</sup> Chiari, *Twentieth-Century French Thought*, pp. 21-43.

<sup>37</sup> Macey, *The Lives of Michel Foucault*, pp. 15-30; Eribon, *Michel Foucault*, pp. 34-38; Descombes, *Modern French Philosophy*, pp. 5-7.

<sup>38</sup> Desanti, “A path in philosophy”, p. 52.

<sup>39</sup> Foucault, “Prison Talk”, p. 51; Benrubi, *La Philosophie Contemporaine en France*, pp. 524-536.

<sup>40</sup> Desanti, “A path in philosophy”, pp. 53-57.

<sup>41</sup> Descombes, *Modern French Philosophy*, p. 3.

## *An Archaeology of Objectivity and Savoir*

part, Hegel, who is rehabilitated amongst catholic scholars as the great transposer of religion into philosophy and whose portrayal as the intellectual father of Marx helps French socialists to establish the PCF in 1905,<sup>42</sup> is most relevant to Foucault's archaeological critique of objectivity. Or rather, Hegel as he appears in the human sciences through his portrayal by two existentialists: firstly, Kojève, who relies on Heidegger's *Being and Time* for his existential orientation, and who lectures to the 1945 generation at the *École Pratique des Hautes Études* between 1933 and 1939; and, secondly, Hyppolite, who approaches existentialism through Sartre's *Being and Nothingness*, and who provides the first French translation of the *Phenomenology of Spirit* in the year the civilised nations of Europe go back to war for a second time.<sup>43</sup>

Kojève distinguishes between a non-dialectical interpretation of Hegel, which keeps to a rational-irrational, same-other opposition, and his own dialectical reading. He points out that, historically, power induces reason to move to what is foreign to it, its other. The question is whether the other is returned to the same in the movement of reason or if, in its desire to embrace both the same and the other, reason in fact transforms itself, loses its identity as the same and goes over into the other? In the mind of Kojève, reason does in fact become the other. Its violation of the other leads to a war of each against all that ends in brutish domination. On this basis, he rejects the parallel progress of man's individual experience of the world that is traced by a phenomenology of *Geist*, and his social experience of freedom that is charted by a scientific philosophy of *Sittlichkeit*. In their place, Kojève speaks of political cynicism and tyrannical politicians who seek to realise philosophical ideals through violence. After Marx's interpretation of history, politicians are the bourgeois lords who deny the proletarian bondsmen their right to recognition. Terror, rather than the progress of *Geist* and *Sittlichkeit*, characterises history. Kojève's epistemologico-political critique is driven by a terrorist philosophy, at the heart of which lies a nietzschean conception of truth that reflects the balance of terror sustained by capitalism.<sup>44</sup>

For Kojève, Hegel advocates a revolutionary social theory which, in place of the dialectical progression of individual and social experience, details the confrontation between the bondsmen and the lords in respect of juridical state power.<sup>45</sup> His interpretation depends on a dualist ontology between the individual

<sup>42</sup> Kelly, *Hegel in France*, pp. 27-36; Clark, *The Foundations of Structuralism*, pp. 17-24; Poster, *Existential Marxism*, pp. 28-32.

<sup>43</sup> Poster, *Existential Marxism*, pp. 5-10.

<sup>44</sup> Descombes, *Modern French Philosophy*, pp. 9-22.

<sup>45</sup> Poster, *Existential Marxism*, pp. 11-16.

## *An Archæology of Objectivity and Savoir*

and social: due to the asymmetry of recognition between the worker and the capitalist, man's animal desire is suspended in a cyclical mode of becoming; also, man's human desire to be different rather than recognised moves him towards a communist conclusion to history.<sup>46</sup>

Of equal if not greater importance to French humanism is Hyppolite's post-war historico-logical, instead of -dialectical, interpretation of Hegel. Hyppolite, who in 1945 catches Foucault's schoolboy imagination for philosophy with his lectures on Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* at the *Lycée Henri-IV*,<sup>47</sup> also lectures at the (*Université de Paris IV*-) *Sorbonne* before his 1962 nomination to the chair of History of Philosophical Thought at the *Collège de France*, where he stays until his death in 1968.<sup>48</sup>

According to Hyppolite, the core tension in Hegel is between phenomenology and scientific philosophy. Instead of an either-or interpretation, of a phenomenological description of man's progress across history versus a reduction of history to the dialectic of reason, Hyppolite claims that, at its terminus of *Geist* in the world, Hegel's absolute idealism is historical and logical.<sup>49</sup> The post-*Aufklärung* daylight of the present is a new epoch, in which individual and social experience unfold in human time. To his faith in Hegel's notion of history as the dialectical progress of freedom, Hyppolite adds Marx's idea that freedom has to be fought for. It is man's duty to take responsibility for the social conditions that realise it.<sup>50</sup> As Foucault claims, Hyppolite first draws attention in France to Hegel's arrogation to philosophy of the right to oversee its origin as well as its accomplishments.<sup>51</sup> In so doing, a hyppolitean Hegel ceases to be the professor's professor, or the master

<sup>46</sup> Descombes, *Modern French Philosophy*, pp. 29-35.

<sup>47</sup> In 1951, when at his second attempt Foucault passes the *agrégation de philosophie*, Hyppolite and Canguilhem are two of the three members of his *jury de agrégation* at the *École Normale*. The year before, Foucault is thwarted from the *promotion* – the handful from across France who annually pass the *agrégation de philosophie* – by a different jury, which Louis Althusser (Foucault's *répétiteur* or tutor) alleges is a result of Foucault's communist sympathies. Ironically, Foucault's randomly chosen topic for his oral exam in 1951 is sexuality, which Canguilhem proposes in an attempt to update the topics for examination, and Foucault thinks is quite unsuitable for an *agrégation de philosophie*. Eribon, *Michel Foucault*, pp. 61-64; Macey, *The Lives of Michel Foucault*, pp. 43-46.

<sup>48</sup> Two years later, Foucault succeeds Hyppolite at the *Collège de France*. Earlier, in 1961 when Foucault decides to submit *Histoire de la Folie* as his *thèse d'état*, Hyppolite, who supervises Foucault's *petite thèse* of a translation and extended introduction of Kant's anthropology, *Anthropologie du point de vue pragmatique*, suggests Canguilhem as a supervisor for the *Histoire de la Folie*. This is partly a question of Canguilhem's expertise, and also a question of tact: a *doctorats ès lettres* requires the prior publication of the *thèse d'état*, which in turn depends on the *imprimatur* of the *Sorbonne*, where Canguilhem is a professor. Macey, *The Lives of Michel Foucault*, pp. 103-104 and pp. 233-236.

<sup>49</sup> Poster, *Existential Marxism*, pp. 27-28.

<sup>50</sup> Miller, *La Passion Foucault*, pp. 56-59.

<sup>51</sup> Foucault, "Jean Hyppolite. 1907-1968", p. 784.

## *An Archæology of Objectivity and Savoir*

system builder, and becomes the influence behind Feuerbach, Søren Kierkegaard, Marx and Nietzsche.<sup>52</sup>

For Kojève and Hyppolite, Hegel lends support to an epistemologico-political critique of the diremption of history and reason.<sup>53</sup> Hyppolite's concept of alienation as man's basic ontological condition posits that, on the basis of the autonomous subject's authentic being, man seeks recognition as a means to bridge reason and history.<sup>54</sup> In addition to this anthropology, Hegel's modes of individual and social experience are treated as modes of productive existence, and the power struggle between the bondsman *qua* worker and the lord *qua* capitalist is the perspective from which to judge historical materialism.

Together with their anthropology of the subject of knowledge, Kojève's and Hyppolite's dialectical history inspires Merleau-Ponty, whose phenomenology describes the process of abridgement of the dirempted man to the world he hitherto only knew in appearance,<sup>55</sup> and Sartre, whose revolutionary man is the being who brings nothingness into existence as a means to transcend diremption.<sup>56</sup> Indeed, Sartre's concept of existence, man-for-himself, is a universal condition that precedes, and only becomes through the negation of, the essential in-itself that defines man's historical conditions of finitude. In this movement of negation that ceaseth only in death, man continually transcends himself in his will to authenticity. Sartre's 'I am' is conceptually prior to 'I think',<sup>57</sup> and what man comes to think in the passage from existence to essence is both defined by and definitive of the community of humanity: in fashioning oneself, Sartre proclaims, one fashions man.<sup>58</sup> Man's authenticity is the sartrean human condition of freedom that justifies humanism's critique, and its failure to be realised results in immaturity, or an unhappy consciousness who lives a life of *mauvaise foi*.<sup>59</sup>

### 4.ii. Archæological Critique

I read the first moment of Foucault's critical history, archæology, as an attempt to

<sup>52</sup> Eribon, *Michel Foucault*, pp. 39-43.

<sup>53</sup> Poster, *Existential Marxism*, pp. 32-35 and pp. 18-22.

<sup>54</sup> Poster, *Existential Marxism*, pp. 24-26.

<sup>55</sup> Descombes, *Modern French Philosophy*, pp. 55-62.

<sup>56</sup> Descombes, *Modern French Philosophy*, pp. 48-54.

<sup>57</sup> Poster, *Existential Marxism*, pp. 79-89. In Merleau-Ponty's case, the 'I perceive', who constructs out of its perceptions of a thing an absolute knowledge of an object, but which an experiential subject can describe, precedes the 'I think'. Descombes, *Modern French Philosophy*, pp. 65-80.

<sup>58</sup> Sartre, *Existentialism and Humanism*, pp. 26-30 and pp. 45-47.

<sup>59</sup> Sartre, *L'être et le neant*, pp. 83-88.

### *An Archaeology of Objectivity and Savoir*

rescue kantian enlightenment—minus critical philosophy's subject of transcendental apperception—from humanism, which grounds objective experience in the dogmas of anthropological foundation, master narrative schemes and universalist history.<sup>60</sup> As a skeptic about the subject of anthropological dialectical history in the human sciences, Foucault endlessly questions constituted experience in pursuit of an ethic of free undogmatic thought.<sup>61</sup> To aid his escape from imprisonment within humanism's thought and practices, which Foucault believes are so intimately a part of who we are that we embrace them as the authentic structure of our being,<sup>62</sup> he draws on Heidegger's critique of anthropocentrism, Nietzsche's conception of truth and power, and the epistemological history of Bachelard and Canguilhem,<sup>63</sup> who problematise dialectical history from the point of view of historicised truth and the determination of concepts by extra-scientific material practices.<sup>64</sup> In addition, Foucault is influenced by Georges Dumézil,<sup>65</sup> Ferdinand Saussure,<sup>66</sup> Sigmund Freud and Husserl,<sup>67</sup> whose respective introduction of historico-geographical structures, the sign, the unconscious and sense also challenge man's monopoly of objectivity. Together with Jacques Lacan's focus on symbols, which sustain a society's cultural narratives through the structuration of unconscious desire,<sup>68</sup> and Claude Lévi-Strauss, who proposes a structuralist methodology for the human sciences that moves from the social to the individual,<sup>69</sup> French philosophers seek to reconstitute critical thought in the 1960s. According to Vincent Descombes, the important ones critique anthropocentrism and dialectical history,<sup>70</sup> and Foucault's archæology, which attempts to eradicate anthropology and to dethrone *l'ordre de l'homme* from history in favour of discursive practices,<sup>71</sup>

<sup>60</sup> Rajchman, *Michel Foucault*, pp. 2-4; Descamps, "Philosophy in France", p. 6.

<sup>61</sup> Rajchman, *Michel Foucault*, p. 7.

<sup>62</sup> Bernauer, "Michel Foucault's Ecstatic Thinking", p. 45.

<sup>63</sup> Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, pp. 189-190.

<sup>64</sup> Bachelard and Canguilhem are successive directors of the *Institute of the History of Sciences, Université de Paris*, and occupants of its chair in the *History and Philosophy of Science*. On these epistemological historians and their influence on Foucault, see Delaporte, "The History of Medicine according to Foucault"; Major-Poetzl, *Michel Foucault's Archæology of Western Culture*, pp. 78-83; Tiles, "Epistemological History".

<sup>65</sup> Foucault, "La vérité et les formes juridiques", pp. 635-637.

<sup>66</sup> Foucault, "Qui êtes-vous, professeur Foucault?", pp. 610-612.

<sup>67</sup> Foucault, "Introduction, in Binswanger (L.), *Le Rêve et l'Existence*", pp. 69-80.

<sup>68</sup> Poster, *Existential Marxism*, pp. 319-321.

<sup>69</sup> Clark, *The Foundations of Structuralism*, pp. 34-109; Merquior, *From Prague to Paris*, pp. 35-95.

<sup>70</sup> Descombes, *Modern French Philosophy*, pp. 108-109.

<sup>71</sup> Foucault, "Les monstruosités de la critique", p. 220; Foucault, "Michel Foucault, Les Mots et les Choses", pp. 500-504.

## *An Archæology of Objectivity and Savoir*

spearheads how to think freely via a critique of humanism's epistemology, which Descombes describes in the following terms.

Whether [an] ... object is henceforth a 'perspective object' (Merleau-Ponty), or whether ... consciousness is compared to nothingness (Sartre), the essential point ... is the irruption of the self into the equation of *being* and *being for myself*, ... . Phenomenology is thus imprisoned within the 'closure of representation' ... inasmuch as it retains the principle of the *subject*. Here the critique of phenomenology links up with the critique of the dialectic. ... But what is the dialectic, if not precisely a superior concept of identity ... which leads to recognition of the *absolute, not as substance but as subject* (Hegel)? The double attack on phenomenological consciousness and the logic of identity is therefore conducted under the banner of a single crusade against the *subject in general*.<sup>72</sup>

My concern with how to do critical thought that realises maturity necessarily focuses on the importance to Foucault of kantian critique and Nietzsche's ontology. In his last interview in June 1984, for example, Foucault says that although "[m]y entire philosophical development was determined by my reading of Heidegger[,] ... I nevertheless recognize that Nietzsche outweighed him".<sup>73</sup> For Foucault's 1960s generation, it is the masters of suspicion, Freud, Nietzsche and Marx, who are crucial.<sup>74</sup> They make interpretation a renewable and never ending duty,<sup>75</sup> and although Foucault "would not have read Nietzsche" without Heidegger,<sup>76</sup> Nietzsche was "a revelation for me. I had the impression of discovering an author completely different to those who were taught to me. I read him with a passion and he transformed my life".<sup>77</sup> Nonetheless, with regard to an archæological critique of objectivity and *savoir*, Foucault is influenced by Heidegger's anti-humanist freedom of the clearing of possibilities.<sup>78</sup> In this respect, Foucault is also skeptical about other reactions against humanism's anthropocentric dialectical history, whether the hermeneutist's efforts to recover ultimate objectivity, or structuralism's explanation of freedom as a function of objective, rule-governed models.<sup>79</sup> It is then useful to know how, as a nominalist history, archæology's object of conditions of existence,

<sup>72</sup> Descombes, *Modern French Philosophy*, p. 76.

<sup>73</sup> Foucault, "The Return of Morality", p. 250.

<sup>74</sup> Descombes, *Modern French Philosophy*, p. 4.

<sup>75</sup> Foucault, "Nietzsche, Freud, Marx", pp. 566-568.

<sup>76</sup> Foucault, "The Return of Morality", p. 250.

<sup>77</sup> "Nietzsche a été une révélation pour moi. J'ai eu l'impression de découvrir un auteur bien différent de celui qu'on m'avait enseigné. Je l'ai lu avec beaucoup de passion, et j'ai rompu avec ma vie". Foucault, "Vérité, pouvoir et soi", p. 780.

<sup>78</sup> Rajchman, *Michel Foucault*, p. 18 and pp. 44-45.

<sup>79</sup> Sheridan, *Michel Foucault*, p. 204.

## *An Archaeology of Objectivity and Savoir*

the historical *a priori*, differs from structuralism's focus on conditions of possibility, the formal *a priori*. Once I have discussed this here, I detail in the next section Foucault's archæological critique of objectivity in humanist critical thought.

In section 1.ii. I distinguished Foucault's critical history of thought from a history of ideas, which analyse systems of representation, and a history of mentalities that examines human behaviour. The latter defines Lévi-Strauss' focus on the macro-structures that govern experience, as well as the *Annales* school of historiography which investigates the continuity of micro-structures of experiential relations across epochs, rather than in their progress from one to the next.<sup>80</sup> For Foucault, the *annaliste's* disputation of the divide between the human sciences and history proves the fallibility of the notion of hegelian time,<sup>81</sup> which raises up *connaissance* in each mode of consciousness.<sup>82</sup> Further, the *annaliste* provides the alternative methodological tools of extra-epochal innovation, contradiction, description, transformation and periodisation.<sup>83</sup> In place of anthropocentric dialectical history, the *Annales* school operates on a functional-structural paradigm. It bypasses narratives of grand political events to advocate a scientific philosophy of social history, which is discerned out of oft neglected micro-structures.<sup>84</sup> The *annaliste* writes the myths of life that are in *perpetuum mobile* beneath the historian's grand narratives. From as far back as the first *annaliste*, Titus Livy, their annually renewed discourse bears witness to how these micro-structural myths justify and reinforce the powers that be and their right to rule.<sup>85</sup>

Archæology is neither antithetical nor reducible to the history of mentalities of the *Annales* school and structuralism. Instead, Foucault's concern is the history of thought, which gives birth to the history of mentalities.<sup>86</sup> Further, because it makes the realist assumption that man perceives things which have an existence and

<sup>80</sup> Foucault, "La philosophie structuraliste permet de diagnostiquer ce qu'est 'aujourd'hui'", p. 581; Foucault, "Michel Foucault explique son dernier livre", p. 773. Foucault differentiates between structuralism, the *Annales* school, Bachelard and Canguilhem, as follows: *épistémographie* (the description of discourses that function and are institutionalised as scientific discourses); *épistémonomique* (the attempt to locate the internal epistemological controls of a scientific discourse); *épistémocritique* (the analysis of the truth and falsity of a scientific discourse's statements); and *épistémologiques* (the analysis of a scientific discourse's theories, conceptual material and the field of application and rules of use for its concepts). Foucault, "(Discussion)", p. 28.

<sup>81</sup> Foucault, "Sur les façons d'écrire l'histoire", p. 586.

<sup>82</sup> Foucault, "La scène de la philosophie", p. 580.

<sup>83</sup> Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, pp. 141-177.

<sup>84</sup> Major-Poetzl, *Michel Foucault's Archaeology of Western Culture*, pp. 15-17.

<sup>85</sup> Foucault, "Cours du 28 janvier 1976", pp. 57-60 and p. 73, f. 1. On the *Annales* school, see Le Roy Ladurie, "History in France".

<sup>86</sup> Foucault, "La philosophie structuraliste permet de diagnostiquer ce qu'est 'aujourd'hui'", p. 583.

### *An Archæology of Objectivity and Savoir*

nature that is independent of consciousness, an archæology of thought opposes the history of ideas that traces advances in systems of representation. Archæology challenges history-as-memory, which recounts what really happened. It also jettisons words and things, or the historian's history of the ideas that represent the world, for in place of things archæology examines discursive objects, whilst words are irrelevant insofar as archæology's focus is not scientific discourse but its very historicity.<sup>87</sup> In short, archæology indicates Foucault's nominalism, which is not to deny a thing exists, "but only that, in order to say what it is, it is necessary to recount its history".<sup>88</sup> Rajchman calls this Foucault's nominalist history, which proceeds with four anti-realist tropes: argument by dispersion of historical unity and totality; argument by reversal of received ideas; argument by critique of the present through writing its past; and argument by singular enlightenment, which rejects universalism so as to enlighten the present.<sup>89</sup>

Thus, whilst archæology, structuralism and Heidegger's existential phenomenology forsake humanism's man as the ground of experience, the first two diverge from heideggerian hermeneutics with the claim that, in the absence of dialectical history, experiential objectivity is discursive rather than discernible from background practices.<sup>90</sup> Further, Dreyfus and Rabinow argue that structuralism's focus on extra-subjective conditions of possibility—kantianism without the transcendental subject, as Lévi-Strauss understands it<sup>91</sup>—diverges from archæology's heideggerean discovery of conditions of existence,<sup>92</sup> a point which Rajchman re-iterates when he says that Foucault's nominalist "history is not 'structuralist' in ... [the 'strong'] sense ... [that] its aim in reconstituting deep traditions is to question their very reason for existence".<sup>93</sup>

Within the 1960s climate of hostility to humanism's epistemological critique, hermeneutics seeks to re-assure modernity of the self-actualisation necessary for recognition, which it does via the derivation of objectivity from background practices, while structuralism tries to restore a kantian understanding of the present with structural conditions of possibility for objectivity. Archæology has elements of

<sup>87</sup> Delaporte, "The History of Medicine according to Foucault", p. 142.

<sup>88</sup> Pasquino, "Michel Foucault (1926-84)", pp. 40-41.

<sup>89</sup> Rajchman, *Michel Foucault*, pp. 54-59.

<sup>90</sup> Dreyfus and Rabinow, *Michel Foucault*, pp. 56-57.

<sup>91</sup> Poster, *Existential Marxism*, p. 315.

<sup>92</sup> Foucault's conditions of existence "bear a striking similarity to what Heidegger, in *Being and Time*, calls an existential analytic. But ... Heidegger's method is hermeneutic or internal, whereas Foucault's is archaeological or external". Dreyfus and Rabinow, *Michel Foucault*, p. 57, f. 5.

<sup>93</sup> Rajchman, *Michel Foucault*, p. 55.



### *An Archæology of Objectivity and Savoir*

both, but it resists the former's search for ultimate objectivity and the latter's location of objectivity in social structures through a history of mentalities. Instead, archæological critique determines to establish how the human sciences, which have man as their condition of possibility, are historically possible, and it asks if the historical consequences of their existence is the ability to think and act freely.<sup>94</sup>

Foucault pursues these themes in *The Order of Things*, which together with *Madness and Civilization* and *The Birth of the Clinic* constitute, within the discursive fields of *savoir*, madness and clinical science, descriptive experiments on the discursive objects of man, psycho-pathology and physio-pathology.<sup>95</sup> Although *The Order of Things* is a corrective to Foucault's earlier analytical over emphasis of words at the expense of their discursive objects,<sup>96</sup> *The Birth of the Clinic* hints at the orientation of *The Order of Things*,<sup>97</sup> insofar as it elucidates the discursive conditions of existence for *connaissance* in clinical science. With its focus on the concepts of death and disease as crucial factors in the constitution of the clinical science of physio-pathology, *The Birth of the Clinic* signals Foucault's debt to Canguilhem, whose "*displacements and transformations* of concepts show that a history of a concept is not wholly and entirely that of its progressive refinement ... but that of its various fields of constitution and validity".<sup>98</sup> As the subtitle suggests, *Une Archéologie du regard médical*, and on the basis of these concepts that shape the medical gaze, Foucault establishes the discontinuity between the renaissance conception of disease, where speaking about and gazing at the sick body resemble each other, and modern clinical science, in which representation demarcates the doctor's words from the patient's sick body.<sup>99</sup> Modern man is the condition behind the doctor's objectifying gaze, which produces *connaissance* of the body-in-itself, and the explanation of why disease meets the forced residence of its truth in the hospital.<sup>100</sup> Foucault's claim is that the reason behind the birth of clinical science is the post-renaissance realisation of death as man's limit, which accounts for the

<sup>94</sup> Gordon, "Afterword", pp. 230-231.

<sup>95</sup> Foucault, "Sur l'archéologie des sciences", p. 709. Because its focus on the confined exclusion of the madman *qua* other is tantamount to a proto-genealogy of the conditions that make humanist normativity possible, I will discuss *Madness and Civilization* in chapter 5. As Foucault says, *Madness and Civilization* is the history of difference, whilst *The Order of Things* is the history of the same, or of the philosophical subject's identity. Foucault, "Michel Foucault, Les Mots et les Choses", p. 498.

<sup>96</sup> Foucault, "La situation de Cuvier", p. 62.

<sup>97</sup> Foucault, "Entretien avec Michel Foucault (1971)", pp. 159-160.

<sup>98</sup> Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, p. 4.

<sup>99</sup> Until 1790, the doctor and the patient engage in dialogue – what is wrong with you? – and from 1820 a monologue takes over every time the doctor asks of the patient: where does it hurt?. Guédez, Foucault, pp. 28-31.

<sup>100</sup> Foucault, *The Birth of the Clinic*, cited in Dews, *Logics of Disintegration*, pp. 174-175.

## *An Archæology of Objectivity and Savoir*

concern with disease and the demand for a science that knows and cures the body, or rather postpones death. It remains a decisive factor for our culture, Foucault argues,

that its first scientific discourse concerning the individual had to pass through this stage of death. Western man could constitute himself in his own eyes as an object of science ... only in the opening created by his own elimination: ... from the integration of death into medical thought is born a medicine that is given as a science of the individual. ... It is understandable, then, that medicine should have had such importance in the constitution of the sciences of man—an importance that is not only methodological, but ontological, in that it concerns man's being as object of positive knowledge.<sup>101</sup>

Further to *The Birth of the Clinic*, *The Order of Things* is a critique of the post-kantian system of thought that turns on the autonomous subject's authentic being that requires self-actualisation. If Foucault's motivation is to transcend anthropocentric dialectical history, his catalyst is the chance discovery of an alien system of thought. It not only reveals the impossibility for the European mind to think *that*, but the scandal of its experiential limitation to the same rather than to the experience of a large number of possible orders that exist separately and irregularly. *A propos* of man, "things are 'laid', 'placed', 'arranged' in sites so very different from one another that it is impossible to define a *common locus* beneath them all".<sup>102</sup> To sustain his critique of humanist objectivity, which the realist historian of ideas explains in terms of the uninterrupted development of the history of reason since the renaissance, Foucault analyses the epistemological transformations which determine the historicity of experience to demonstrate that the responsibility to think freely does not rest on the ever broadening shoulders of man but with an epoch's *savoir*.<sup>103</sup> Conditions of existence are *a priori* to conditions of possibility, and an archæology of *savoir* investigates:

on the basis of what historical *a priori* ... ideas could appear, sciences be established, experience be reflected in philosophies, rationalities be formed, only, perhaps, to dissolve and vanish soon afterwards. ... [W]hat I am attempting to bring to light is the epistemological field, the *episteme* in which knowledge ... grounds its positivity and thereby manifests a history which is

<sup>101</sup> Foucault, *The Birth of the Clinic*, quoted in Sheridan, *Michel Foucault*, pp. 43-44. My summary of *The Birth of the Clinic* draws on Racevskis, *Michel Foucault and the Subversion of Intellect*, pp. 51-57; Major-Poetzl, *Michel Foucault's Archæology of Western Culture*, pp. 134-148.

<sup>102</sup> Foucault, *The Order of Things*, pp. xvii-xviii.

<sup>103</sup> Foucault, "La situation de Cuvier", pp. 30-36.

## *An Archæology of Objectivity and Savoir*

not that of its growing perfection, but rather that of its condition of possibility.<sup>104</sup>

Foucault describes three epistemes which are specific to epochs he calls renaissance humanism, classical rationalism and modernity.<sup>105</sup> But his concern with a critical history of the present means these are descriptive terms that simply denote prehistory and what is contemporary,<sup>106</sup> or pre- and post-kantian critical thought. It is the change in the mode of being of things, which appears in *savoir*, that is of interest to Foucault. In the renaissance and classical epochs, words resemble and represent things, and in virtue of an alteration in the order that divides things up before they are presented to the understanding this prehistory matures into the contemporary modern epoch.<sup>107</sup> What Heidegger calls the metaphysics of subjectivity, where Kant's absolute self-knowing conditions all objectivity and Hegel's dialectic produces the subjectivity of the absolute subject who knows reality,<sup>108</sup> ultimately orders the truth of experience through the human sciences. Yet, Foucault claims, their wrinkle in *connaissance*, man, is no more than a rift in the order of things, who along with his dreams of humanism and an anthropology *qua* universal, half-empirical, half-philosophical critique, will disappear when *connaissance* discovers a new form.<sup>109</sup> However, before Foucault clears the field of the human sciences in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* and elaborates the method relevant to new forms of *connaissance*, he must first erase man in *The Order of Things*. The next section shows how he does this.

### 4.iii. Foucault's Erasure of Man from Objective Experience

The renaissance episteme of resemblance, which is a syntactic system of words that exist physiognomically,<sup>110</sup> is prominent in the sixteenth century. A *connaissance* of things is made possible on the basis of the similitude between them. It is understood through the discursive practices of *convenientia*, *aemulatio*, *analogy* and *sympathies*, which show how the world folds in upon, duplicates, reflects and forms a chain with itself. The similitude of these discursive practices determine that the episteme of resemblance's epistemological statements correspond with the things

<sup>104</sup> Foucault, *The Order of Things*, p. xxii.

<sup>105</sup> Foucault, *The Order of Things*, p. 318.

<sup>106</sup> Foucault, *The Order of Things*, p. 304.

<sup>107</sup> Foucault, *The Order of Things*, p. xxii.

<sup>108</sup> Heidegger, "Hegel and the Greeks", p. 325.

<sup>109</sup> Foucault, *The Order of Things*, pp. xxiii-xxiv.

<sup>110</sup> Habermas, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, p. 258.

## *An Archæology of Objectivity and Savoir*

they articulate.<sup>111</sup> Each thing has a macro-cosmic purpose within the great chain of being, but because meaning is often hidden it needs to be divined and then signed into words that hold true.<sup>112</sup> The renaissance's *connaissance* of things demands undistorted similitude. It depends on the method of interpretation, where a divine semiology is superimposed upon the hermeneutics of the scholarly powers that be. God is the historical *a priori*, as it were, who precedes the formal *a priori* of similitude in discursive practices. They require interpretation to map out their objectivity, for in the episteme of resemblance an "infinite play within nature finds its link, its form, and its limitation in the relation of the microcosm to the macrocosm, ... [whilst] the infinite task of commentary derive its strength from the promise of an effectively written text which interpretation will one day reveal in its entirety".<sup>113</sup>

Descartes signals the beginning of the classical epoch in the middle of the seventeenth century. The discursively produced similitude of the renaissance's episteme of resemblance is replaced in the classical episteme of representation by two discursive practices: *mathesis*, which is a mathematical science for the measurement and order of things into identities; and *taxonomia*, which classifies things in their difference.<sup>114</sup> Where the renaissance episteme characterises the resemblance of things to words—in the prose of the world, the sign is indicative of the thing—in the classical episteme the sign becomes an instrument by which to order things. An ordering of the difference of things by words that represent their identity replaces interpretation,<sup>115</sup> and Foucault says these:

new arrangement[s] brought about the appearance of a new problem, unknown until then: in the sixteenth century, one asked oneself how it was possible to know a sign did in fact designate what it signified; from the seventeenth century, one began to ask how a sign could be linked to what it signified.<sup>116</sup>

The new classical relation of words to things is evident, Foucault argues, in the empirical sciences of general grammar, natural history and the analysis of wealth. They have *mathesis* and *taxonomia* as their historical *a priori*, and (general

<sup>111</sup> *Convenientia* portrays the resemblances between things that have related properties; *aemulatio* shows the resemblance of distant objects to each other; *analogy* relates resemblances that are neither visible nor essential to things themselves; and *sympathies* define resemblances between all objects. Foucault, *The Order of Things*, pp. 18-25.

<sup>112</sup> Foucault, *The Order of Things*, pp. 27-30.

<sup>113</sup> Foucault, *The Order of Things*, pp. 41-42.

<sup>114</sup> Foucault, *The Order of Things*, pp. 71-76.

<sup>115</sup> Foucault, *The Order of Things*, pp. 57-67.

<sup>116</sup> Foucault, *The Order of Things*, pp. 42-43.

## *An Archaeology of Objectivity and Savoir*

grammar's) classical language, which mirrors nature, as their formal *a priori*. *Connaissance* is ordered by the name, and in classical language to name is to move towards the sovereign act of nomination, where words and things are conjoined in their essence. This act of unity in general grammar is the task of the verb, which is the key to the attributive function that gives rise to the proposition that names via a noun.<sup>117</sup> By the same token of verb-noun in general grammar's classical language, structure-character and value-money establish propositions in natural history and the analysis of wealth. Classical language is the power that connects living human beings to the concept of the table, and it is the principle of their ordering via the concept of exchange.<sup>118</sup> In the classical episteme, objectivity depends on classical language that is a universal mode of representation. The sovereignty of its words form a colourless network through which things manifest themselves. Via the power of language, and without recourse to any science of man, the classical episteme of representation links 'I think' and 'I am', human nature and nature.<sup>119</sup>

Together with its ordering of the world into identities and differences, the classical episteme's representation of things to thought through the transparent medium of classical language comes to a relatively abrupt halt at the end of the eighteenth century. In its place arises the modern episteme of analogy and succession, "that is, of internal relations between elements whose totality performs a function" in virtue of a behind-the-scenes world deeper than representation itself.<sup>120</sup> Kant's critical philosophy signals the threshold of the modern episteme, in which the relation between the verb and noun, between the attribution and articulation of a thing, is broken, as is the fixity of the name of a thing through time.<sup>121</sup> For Foucault, the discontinuity between prehistory and the contemporary is the result of two forms of modern philosophy: the first is kantian, which questions the relation between logic and ontology, whilst it continues to grapple with the classical problem of representation, especially *mathesis*; the second is hegelian, which inquires into the relation between signification and time, and brings the renaissance's method of interpretation back into prominence. In its use of components from transcendental and absolute idealism, Foucault argues that epistemological critique in the modern episteme fundamentally questions "the relation of meaning with the form of truth and the form of being: in the firmament

<sup>117</sup> Foucault, *The Order of Things*, ch. 4.

<sup>118</sup> Foucault, *The Order of Things*, chs. 5-6.

<sup>119</sup> Foucault, *The Order of Things*, pp. 309-311.

<sup>120</sup> Foucault, *The Order of Things*, p. 218 and p. 239.

<sup>121</sup> Foucault, *The Order of Things*, p. 242 and pp. 206-211.

## *An Archæology of Objectivity and Savoir*

of our reflection there reigns a discourse ... which would at the same time be an ontology and a semantics".<sup>122</sup>

The reign of the subject with a transcendental capacity for apperception and dialectic, who determines both the mode of being of things and the transformation of their meaning in history, is established between 1775 and 1825. With Kant, the conditions of possibility for the objects of experience are identified with the formal *a priori* of experience itself, whilst Hegel seeks the formal *a priori* of experience in the conditions of possibility of objects and their existence.<sup>123</sup> The empirical sciences of general grammar, natural history and the analysis of wealth are strangers in the modern episteme, where critique is grounded in the transcendental dialectical subject. They are superseded by philology, biology and economics, which develop with the concepts of language (*qua* grammatical system), life (*qua* organic structure) and labour (*qua* production).<sup>124</sup> Individuals in their factual, contingent existence become objects of *connaissance* in the nineteenth century philosophies of the word, life and the will,<sup>125</sup> which determine the analytic of finitude and human existence.<sup>126</sup> These empirical sciences that turn on an ontology and a semantics are grounded in the epistemological mode of consciousness of man, who assumes the role of an empirico-transcendental *doublet*.<sup>127</sup> Insofar as *connaissance* has anatomo-physiological conditions in the faculties of intuition and understanding, empirical man is the object of *connaissance* that is attained via the analysis of the transcendental aesthetic. Further, aware of his diremption from things, man is the subject of all possible *connaissance*. He makes the transcendental dialectic, which points to the historical, social and economic conditions of *savoir*, analytically feasible.<sup>128</sup> In the upheaval of the archæological mutation that is personified by Kant and Hegel, Foucault argues,

man appears in his ambiguous position as an object of knowledge and as a subject that knows: enslaved sovereign, observed spectator, he appears in the place belonging to the king ... [and demands] that the entire space of ... representation should at last be related to one corporeal gaze.<sup>129</sup>

<sup>122</sup> Foucault, *The Order of Things*, pp. 207-208.

<sup>123</sup> Foucault, *The Order of Things*, p. 244.

<sup>124</sup> Foucault, *The Order of Things*, ch. 8.

<sup>125</sup> Foucault, *The Order of Things*, pp. 237-243.

<sup>126</sup> Foucault, *The Order of Things*, pp. 317-322.

<sup>127</sup> Foucault, *The Order of Things*, pp. 306-308.

<sup>128</sup> Foucault, *The Order of Things*, pp. 312-316.

<sup>129</sup> Foucault, *The Order of Things*, p. 312.

## *An Archæology of Objectivity and Savoir*

Consequently, epistemological critique in the empirical sciences of philology, biology and economics is caught in a criticism-positivism-metaphysics triangle that continues through to Bergson in the 1920s.<sup>130</sup> Critical thought is defined by an empirico-transcendental reduplication, which makes man *qua* subject of *connaissance* the foundation of the finitude that requires *connaissance* of man as an object in the first place.<sup>131</sup> In their drive against diremption, philology, biology and economics are “imbued with the necessity of thinking the unthought—of reflecting the contents of the *In-itself* in the form of the *For-itself*, of ending man’s alienation by reconciling him with his own essence”.<sup>132</sup> Critical thought and the empirical sciences find themselves in a position of reciprocal borrowing and contestation.<sup>133</sup> Kant and Hegel share the same archæological subsoil, and their epistemological consciousness, man, defines the conditions of existence for the modern episteme’s analytic of finitude, its empirico-transcendental reduplication and its relation of the *cogito* to the unthought.<sup>134</sup> Humanism’s anthropocentric dialectical history is dependent on the subject of both transcendental apperception and dialectic. An hegelian pseudo-metaphysics of language, life and labour, which induces an anthropological sleep,<sup>135</sup> has as its indispensable correlative the synthetic activity of the kantian foundational subject, who offers certainty and a place of tranquillised sleep.<sup>136</sup> Foucault’s archæological critique of humanism’s objective experience is a wager against its critical thought, in which he stands to gain, firstly, the erasure, “like a face drawn at the edge of the sea”, of its condition of possibility, man, and, secondly, the inheritance of kantian *Aufklärung* and the responsibility to think and act freely.<sup>137</sup>

If the discovery of the Return is indeed the end of philosophy, then the end of man, for its part, is the return of the beginning of philosophy. It is no longer possible to think in our day other than in the void left by man’s disappearance. For this void does not create a deficiency; it does not constitute a lacuna that must be filled. It is nothing more, and nothing less, than the unfolding of a space in which it is once again possible to think.<sup>138</sup>

<sup>130</sup> Foucault, *The Order of Things*, pp. 244-245.

<sup>131</sup> Foucault, *The Order of Things*, pp. 325-340.

<sup>132</sup> Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, p. 327.

<sup>133</sup> Foucault, *The Order of Things*, p. 162.

<sup>134</sup> Foucault, *The Order of Things*, p. 335.

<sup>135</sup> Foucault, *The Order of Things*, p. 341.

<sup>136</sup> Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, p. 13.

<sup>137</sup> Foucault, *The Order of Things*, p. 387.

<sup>138</sup> Foucault, *The Order of Things*, pp. 342-343.

**4.iv. A Philosophische Archäologie of Savoir**

On first appearances, this talk of the beginning of philosophy would seem to vindicate Habermas' charge, which I mentioned in section 1.i., that Foucault's critique of humanism is indicative of an anti-enlightenment philosophy. However, this claim can only make sense to those who are unable to comprehend that a viable way to do critical thought is to let critique precipitate a conception of maturity. *The Order of Things* is then an archæological critique of humanism's amalgamation, in man, of Kant's transcendental apperception with Hegel's transcendental dialectic. As the subject of anthropocentric dialectical history, this philosophy of man grounds epistemological critique in the empirical and human sciences, and Foucault opposes those who, despite Kant's demonstration of the division between them, surreptitiously confuse the empirical and transcendental.<sup>139</sup> Indeed, Foucault's post-humanist critical thought is based on Kant's understanding of the present, albeit cleansed of the transcendental narcissism of the subject as the source of empirical objectivity.<sup>140</sup> It is Nietzsche, whose sense that the death of God invites the disappearance of man, that helps Foucault retrieve Kant. He (Nietzsche) marks "the threshold beyond which contemporary philosophy can begin thinking again".<sup>141</sup> In this respect, chapter 10 of *The Order of Things*, together with *The Archaeology of Knowledge*—a theoretical postscript to the former<sup>142</sup>—contain Foucault's summary of contemporary critical thought's relation to humanism, and his suggestion of how to proceed beyond it. This is my topic for analysis here, and in section 4.v. I examine how, once May 1968 raises the problem of cause and effect in objective experience for the archæologist, Foucault looks to Nietzsche and makes *pouvoir* the non-discursive and dominant other of the *savoir* that is behind discursive practices.

The human sciences, Foucault claims, constitute a body of knowledge which takes as its object the empirical entity of man. They—primarily literature, psychology and sociology—appear in virtue of the formal *a priori* of the modern

<sup>139</sup> The cause of the confusion, Foucault argues, comes from the fact that, of Kant's four critical questions (what can I know?, what ought I to do?, what may I hope for? and what is man?), the first three find themselves referred to the fourth by humanism and inscribed to its account. Foucault, *The Order of Things*, p. 341.

<sup>140</sup> Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, p. 203. That is, after Kant "distinguished the *nihil negativum* and the *nihil privatum*—a distinction known to have opened the way for the advance of critical thought ... [he] ended by closing this opening when he ultimately relegated all critical investigations to an anthropological question; ... we have subsequently interpreted Kant's action as the granting of an indefinite respite to metaphysics, because dialectics substituted for the questioning of being and limits the play of contradiction and totality". Foucault, "A Preface to Transgression", pp. 36-38.

<sup>141</sup> Foucault, *The Order of Things*, p. 342. My emphasis.

<sup>142</sup> Sheridan, *Michel Foucault*, p. 89.



## *An Archæology of Objectivity and Savoir*

episteme, or Kant's and Hegel's empirico-transcendental doublet, which must be conceived of (ontology) and known (semantics).<sup>143</sup> Yet the human sciences that are dependent on man's epistemological consciousness are in turn the effect of the historical *a priori*, which determines that the modern episteme has three dimensions: firstly, the rigorous physical sciences of the necessary, where mathematics helps truth and pure reason to emerge;<sup>144</sup> secondly, the empirical sciences of philology, biology and economics, which are mathematicalisable; and, thirdly, (philosophical) critique, which in its guise as humanism's anthropocentric dialectical history is related to the empirical sciences as a philosophy of symbols, life and alienation, and to the physical sciences in terms of the formalisation of thought.<sup>145</sup> In principle, the human sciences exist outside this epistemological trihedron. Practically, they flourish in the interstices of these discursive practices, from which they borrow mathematical formulae and the concepts of the empirical sciences, or they address themselves to the ontology of radical finitude that preoccupies critique. Similarly, the physical and empirical sciences, as well as critique, easily deviate from their domains of practice into that of each other, or the human sciences themselves, whence Foucault's perception of the threat to *connaissance* today of humanism's anthropologisation.<sup>146</sup>

However, Foucault says that his archæological critique of the historical *a priori* of the human sciences reveals that, contrary to the humanist who speaks of the continuity and progress of reason, neither the human sciences nor their formal *a priori*, man, appear as the effect of the physical sciences, in which reason does indeed foster progress. Instead, the human sciences arise *vis-à-vis* the objects of the empirical sciences and critique, or language, life, labour and the analytic of finitude.<sup>147</sup> The human sciences are addressed to man insofar as he speaks, lives and produces, though not in terms of what he is by nature,

but ... what man is in his positivity (living, speaking, labouring being) ... [and] what enables this same being to know (or seek to know) what life is, in what the essence of labour and its laws consist, and in what way he is able to speak. The human sciences thus occupy the distance that separates (though not without connecting them) biology, economics, and philology from that which gives them

<sup>143</sup> Foucault, *The Order of Things*, pp. 344-345.

<sup>144</sup> Foucault, *The Order of Things*, p. ix.

<sup>145</sup> Foucault, *The Order of Things*, pp. 346-347.

<sup>146</sup> Foucault, *The Order of Things*, p. 348

<sup>147</sup> Foucault, *The Order of Things*, pp. 350-352.

## *An Archæology of Objectivity and Savoir*

possibility in the very being of man.<sup>148</sup>

In other words, the human sciences are meta-epistemological sciences of duplication.<sup>149</sup> They give rise to three epistemological regions, in which concepts are borrowed and models utilised from other domains of *connaissance* “to create groups of phenomena as so many ‘objects’ for a possible branch of knowledge”.<sup>150</sup> Strictly speaking, this regionalism of the human sciences between the empirical sciences and critique defines them as disciplines, or groups of statements that borrow their organisation from science, tend to coherence and demonstrativity, and are institutionalised and sometimes taught as sciences.<sup>151</sup> The nineteenth century, Foucault argues, is characterised by: a literary model of signification and system that is gleaned from philology; a psychological model of function and norm that is gained from biology; and a sociological model of conflict and rule that is gathered from economics. In addition, internal criticism shifts the focus from the first to the second of these terms, because the system in relation to the signification it makes possible, the property of the norm in relation to the function it determines, and the rule in relation to the conflict it regulates, are not given to consciousness. Signification, function and conflict must be represented by the subject, who is also an object of *connaissance*. Lastly, history is the background that acts as a limit to the epistemological regions of literature, psychology and sociology, or rather the history of man demands a history of his language, life and labour.<sup>152</sup> In these disciplinary regions of the human sciences, the continuity and progress of a dialectical history is combined with an analytic of finitude undertaken as a transcendental interrogation,<sup>153</sup> This combination is possible due to the general arrangement of the *episteme*,

[which] provides them with a site, summons them, and establishes them – thus enabling them to constitute man as their object. We shall say, therefore, that a ‘human science’ exists, not wherever man is in question, but wherever there is analysis ... of norms, rules, and signifying totalities which unveil to consciousness the conditions of its forms and contents.<sup>154</sup>

<sup>148</sup> Foucault, *The Order of Things*, p. 353.

<sup>149</sup> Foucault, *The Order of Things*, p. 355.

<sup>150</sup> Foucault, *The Order of Things*, p. 356.

<sup>151</sup> Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, pp. 176-178.

<sup>152</sup> Foucault, *The Order of Things*, pp. 359-373.

<sup>153</sup> Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, pp. 181-185.

<sup>154</sup> Foucault, *The Order of Things*, p. 364.

## *An Archaeology of Objectivity and Savoir*

Nonetheless, Foucault detects three counter-human sciences that lead the human sciences back to their epistemological basis and unmake man as their formal *a priori*. Psychoanalysis, for example, investigates the unconscious *qua* desire (Freud), law (Lacan) and death (Nietzsche), and ethnology studies the historicity of reason through other cultures (Dumézil) and their social structures (Lévi-Strauss).<sup>155</sup> Thirdly, in much the same way that general grammar's classical language acts as the condition of possibility for natural history and the analysis of wealth in the classical episteme, Foucault alludes to the potential in the empirical science of philology for a pure theory of language that can serve as the formal *a priori* of psychoanalysis and ethnology. He speaks of a critical impetus in these counter-human sciences that displaces the basis of Kant's request for a history of reason from man to a post-humanist condition of possibility, language.<sup>156</sup> It is in this sense that Foucault's archaeology is proposed as a move beyond the human sciences and the epistemological critique of humanism, to which they are related within the modern episteme. "The thought of finitude laid down by the Kantian critique as philosophy's task—all that still forms the immediate space of our reflection",<sup>157</sup> but without the epistemological consciousness of man. Instead, Foucault proposes an archaeological description of the conditions of existence that determine *connaissance*, which mediates the subject's objective experience of things and the limits of who we are.

As Foucault sees it, an episteme is an anonymously written *Weltanschauung* that imposes norms and postulates. It is common to all discursive practices.<sup>158</sup> The role of the archaeologist is to examine the episteme's non-formal *connaissance*, which is contained in its discursive formations, positivities and philosophical, scientific and literary texts.<sup>159</sup> Despite its informality and dispersal, this non-formal *connaissance* amounts to an episteme's archive, its conceptual framework or paradigm.<sup>160</sup> Foucault approaches the archive not as a document, but in terms of Canguilhem's idea of a monument, an *arché*, out of which the archaeologist distinguishes the rules that differentiate discursive practices in their unitary existence and duration.<sup>161</sup> These unitary, durable discursive practices are the

<sup>155</sup> Foucault, *The Order of Things*, pp. 374-379.

<sup>156</sup> Foucault, *The Order of Things*, pp. 381-383.

<sup>157</sup> Foucault, *The Order of Things*, p. 384.

<sup>158</sup> Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, pp. 190-191.

<sup>159</sup> Foucault, "Sur l'archéologie des sciences", pp. 724-725.

<sup>160</sup> Couzens Hoy, "Introduction", p. 5.

<sup>161</sup> Foucault, "Sur l'archéologie des sciences", p. 708.

## *An Archaeology of Objectivity and Savoir*

condition of possibility for a positivity, a science, which gives rise to formal *connaissance* on the basis of systematic statements of rules for the formation of things (for example, the types of syntax, semantic elements and operational possibilities that govern things) and systematic statements of rules of enunciation.<sup>162</sup> Foucault designates the space in which the reality of statements of discursive practices are formed as the historical *a priori*, “the border of time that surrounds our present, ... [and] which, outside ourselves, delimits us”.<sup>163</sup> This atom of discourse precedes the formal *a priori*,<sup>164</sup> the condition for the possibility of *connaissance*, and through the analysis of the historical *a priori* an understanding of an episteme’s discursive order of things, its *savoir*, is realised.<sup>165</sup> For Foucault, *savoir* resides between the physical and empirical sciences that determine an episteme’s codes and critique.

The fundamental codes of a culture – those governing its language, its schemas of perception, its exchanges, its techniques, its values, the hierarchy of its practices – establish for every man ... the empirical orders ... within which he will be at home. At the other extremity of thought, there are the scientific theories or the philosophical interpretations which explain why order exists in general, ... and why this particular order has been established and not some other. But between these two regions, ... lies a ... certain unspoken order; ... . It is on the basis of this newly perceived order that the codes of language, perception, and practice are criticized and rendered partially invalid ... . [I]n every culture, between the use of what one might call the ordering codes and reflections upon order itself, there is the pure experience of order and its modes of being. ... [Archæology] is an attempt to analyse that experience.<sup>166</sup>

Foucault’s articulation of an episteme through an archæological analysis of the archive’s historical *a priori* completes the work of Bachelard and Canguilhem, who first open up the epistemological field of non-formal *connaissance*.<sup>167</sup> To be sure, archæology suspends those concepts at the heart of the history of ideas – for example, tradition, evolution, the book or *œuvre* – which are believed to harbour the progress and continuity of formal *connaissance*.<sup>168</sup> Further, archæology’s emphasis

<sup>162</sup> Foucault, “Sur l’archéologie des sciences”, pp. 710-719.

<sup>163</sup> Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, pp. 128-131. “This *a priori* is what, in a given period, delimits in the totality of experience a field of knowledge, provides man’s everyday perception with theoretical powers, and defines the conditions in which he can sustain a discourse about things that is recognized to be true”. Foucault, *The Order of Things*, p. 158.

<sup>164</sup> Guédez, *Foucault*, pp. 72-75.

<sup>165</sup> Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, pp. 125-127.

<sup>166</sup> Foucault, *The Order of Things*, pp. xx-xxi.

<sup>167</sup> Foucault, “Sur l’archéologie des sciences”, pp. 697-698.

<sup>168</sup> Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, pp. 21-30.

## *An Archæology of Objectivity and Savoir*

on the extra-subjective conditions of existence for *connaissance* translates into an indifference toward the historian of science's author, who is the cause that effects,<sup>169</sup> especially avant-garde writers emancipated from the world.<sup>170</sup>

Like the epistemological consciousness of man, the notion of the author as an individualised figure whose powers of expression recount narrative stories, or who can be characterised by a unique, definable *œuvre* that is also characteristic of who the author is, are no longer tenable.<sup>171</sup> In their place, Foucault talks of the author function, which locates the writer outside and antecedent to their text that is contingent upon the historical *a priori*.<sup>172</sup> Occasionally, like Marx and Freud, there will be unique authors, or founders of discursivity, who establish a formal *a priori*.<sup>173</sup> But even here, Foucault notes (in respect of Hyppolite's *œuvre*), the prose of an author takes on a voice and life of its own only if it is released from the texts in which it originates, and from the academic rigours that accompany their employment.<sup>174</sup> Finally, as Foucault argues in *The Order of Things*, archæology opposes the anthropological view of the diachronic subject who shoulders conditions of existence and dialectical history,<sup>175</sup> for it gives rise to realist assumptions which describe discursive practices rather than the discursive objects inside them.<sup>176</sup>

Although he acknowledges that he is not the first person to use archæological critique, Foucault claims originality for his *critique de notre temps*. It includes retrospective analyses of the historical phenomena of exclusion and of the conditions of existence that enable the constitution of reason and the clinical and human sciences.<sup>177</sup> His science of the archive is a critique of anthropocentric dialectical history,<sup>178</sup> as well as an attempt to retrieve kantian critical thought from its self-induced tranquillised sleep courtesy of the transcendental subject, and from the anthropological sleep effected by a humanistic reading of Hegel. Archæology's description of the historical *a priori* that conditions all possibility in discursive practices is Foucault's riposte to the objective experience of humanism's subject of

<sup>169</sup> Foucault, "What is an Author?", p. 101.

<sup>170</sup> Foucault, "The Functions of Literature", pp. 308-310.

<sup>171</sup> Foucault, "What is an Author?", pp. 102-105.

<sup>172</sup> Foucault, "What is an Author?", pp. 108-113.

<sup>173</sup> Foucault, "What is an Author?", pp. 114-116.

<sup>174</sup> Foucault, "Jean Hyppolite. 1907-1968", p. 785.

<sup>175</sup> Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, pp. 200-206.

<sup>176</sup> Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, pp. 137-140.

<sup>177</sup> Foucault, "Conversation avec Michel Foucault", pp. 182-183.

<sup>178</sup> Foucault, "La naissance d'un monde", p. 786.

## *An Archæology of Objectivity and Savoir*

knowledge that he finds so wanting. Based on Kant's idea for a *philosophische Archäologie*, Foucault's archæological critique is an excavation of that which renders necessary a certain form of thought.<sup>179</sup> It is a non-subjective means to describe the nature of reason, the historical *a priori*, which constitutes the facts of reason or the discursive practices of *connaissance* through which the subject experiences an objective world. As Kant outlines it, an archæological critique of thought:

is neither an historical nor an empirical, but a rational, *a priori* philosophical, history. Although it establishes the facts of reason, it does so not on account of reason's history, but as a *philosophische Archäologie* that excavates them from the nature of reason itself.<sup>180</sup>

### 4.v. May 1968 and Foucault's Archæology and Genealogy

As I have shown in the two preceding sections, archæology has a dual purpose. Firstly, in *The Order of Things* Foucault uses archæology to critique the subject of anthropocentric dialectical history, who drives the epistemological critique of the human sciences that produce objective experience of finitude. Secondly, upon its successful erasure of humanism's empirico-transcendental *doublet*, archæology explains the cause of man's experience of objectivity in terms of *savoir*, or the historical *a priori*. In the discursive practices which produce *connaissance*, objectivity comes from above rather than below, from the conditions of existence, *savoir*, and not the modern episteme's condition of possibility, man. Yet, whilst Foucault is successful in his first archæological purpose of the eradication of anthropologism and the dethronement of the dialectic from history—that is, in his critique of humanism's objectivity—his second purpose, the restoration of language as the formal *a priori* of discursive practices, which have their condition of existence in *savoir*, is less so. As Dreyfus and Rabinow point out, Foucault's archæological critique of *savoir* brackets the objectivity of truth and meaning that is given by a transcendental subject, but its post-humanist constructive purpose entails the rejection of the status of discursive practices as objective causal laws, subjective

<sup>179</sup> Macey, *The Lives of Michel Foucault*, p. 162.

<sup>180</sup> "Une histoire philosophique de la philosophie est elle-même possible non pas historiquement ou empiriquement, mais rationnellement, c'est-à-dire *a priori*. Car, encore qu'elle établisse des faits de Raison, ce n'est pas au récit historique qu'elle les emprunte, mais elle les tire de la nature de la Raison humaine au titre d'archéologie philosophique (sie zieht sie aus der Natur der menschlichen Vernunft als philosophische Archäologie)". Kant, *Fortschritte der Metaphysik*, quoted in and by Foucault, "Les monstruosités de la critique", p. 221, note.

## *An Archaeology of Objectivity and Savoir*

rules or horizons of meaningful practices.<sup>181</sup> In their constitutive relation to the historical *a priori*, discursive practices are a law unto themselves.

[The archæologist] must perform an 'ego split' in order to look on as a detached spectator at the very phenomena in which, as an empirical interested ego[,] ... one can't help being involved. Foucault the archaeologist looks on, as a detached metaphenomenologist, at the historical Foucault who can't, if he thinks about human beings in a serious way, help thinking in terms of the meanings and truth claims governed by the latest discursive formation.<sup>182</sup>

For Dreyfus and Rabinow, Foucault's critical thought displays an underlying continuity—what I call his critical history—and an important switch from archæology to genealogy. The shift is not indicative of the futility of archæology, but comes about because Foucault's underlying continuity is an ability to push one way of thinking to its limits, at which point he recognises them—archæology's failure to explain objectivity in the human sciences—and then tries to overcome them.<sup>183</sup> Also, as Sheridan argues, Foucault's specific target of archæological critique is the humanist subject of knowledge, who in supporting marxism's focus on the objectivity of superstructures overlooks the archive previous to them.<sup>184</sup> In a similar vein, with my thematic of critical history I understand Foucault's archæological critique in relation to its first purpose, namely, a rejection of humanist epistemology. Notwithstanding, there is a problem with the second purpose, especially the causal ground of objectivity in the archæologist's conception of discursive practices that depend on *savoir*. The prompt for its solution is May 1968, and the saviour is Nietzsche.

Only a brief summary of the events in 1968 is necessary. Although reformed, from an institution that transmits liberal culture for an élite *haute bourgeoisie* to a mass-university that produces scientists and social engineers for a modern society, French universities in the 1960s are antiquated, hierarchical and reproductive of a bureaucratic élite.<sup>185</sup> In March 1968, students at Nanterre University in the western suburbs of Paris demand the reform of the *grandes écoles*, which if only a few kilometres away on the *rive gauche* are five centuries away philosophically.<sup>186</sup> The official history of ideas taught in the *grandes écoles*, for example, maintains the

<sup>181</sup> Dreyfus and Rabinow, *Michel Foucault*, pp. 79-85.

<sup>182</sup> Dreyfus and Rabinow, *Michel Foucault*, p. 87.

<sup>183</sup> Dreyfus and Rabinow, *Michel Foucault*, pp. 98-100.

<sup>184</sup> Sheridan, *Michel Foucault*, pp. 209ff..

<sup>185</sup> Dews, *Logics of Disintegration*, pp. 171-172.

<sup>186</sup> Gutman, "L'avant-mai des philosophes", p. 27.

## *An Archaeology of Objectivity and Savoir*

juridical power of the fifth republic in that it is basically a history of official ideas, if not an official history.<sup>187</sup> Within two months, on the night of the barricades, there is a violent turn in the student protests.<sup>188</sup> Sporadic violence continues until the middle of June, when left-wing parties (the PCF excepted) and the *Confédération générale du travail* (CGT) go on strike in support of the students. Shortly hereafter, once the CGT signs the *Grenelle Accords*, strikes are called off and left-wing parties withdraw their support for the students. Although, as Hannah Arendt points out, 1968 is a classic revolutionary situation, it is resolved by the same politicians and professors whose power and knowledge are the object of protest. Potential revolution concludes in reform because the only person prepared to seize power and take responsibility is Charles de Gaulle, who negotiates sufficient concessions to push the fifth republic into its second decade.<sup>189</sup> 1968 supports Foucault's claim that protests are not a function of general theories, which contain the truth of the protester's cause, but merely indicative of the systematic exercise and application of power itself.<sup>190</sup>

There are two legacies for critical thought from 1968. One comes from those who continue to say they want a revolution to change constitutions and institutions, which is a solution based on evolution. The other comes from those who would also like to change the world, yet without a clear idea of the solution's plan and only evidence of the destruction of revolution, they insist one should free the mind instead and change the revolutionary's head. Humanist critical thought encapsulates the desire for revolutionary political critique, whilst 1968's second legacy demands a reconceptualisation of knowledge and power, especially the *relation* between them, for if knowledge and power "were identical, I would not have to study them and I would be spared a lot of fatigue as a result".<sup>191</sup>

May 1968 is the fruition of the eschatological theme, present since the 1950s amongst the generation raised on the classics of the end, Hegel, Marx, Nietzsche and Heidegger, of anthropocentric dialectical history and the philosophy of the subject.<sup>192</sup> If 1968 signals the failure of humanist epistemological critique and a wider refusal to entertain the question of *connaissance* without an epistemological

<sup>187</sup> Glucksmann, "Éclaté l'hexagone", p. 191.

<sup>188</sup> On 10 May 1968, the *International Herald Tribune* reports: "The police set off flares and fired in their grenades. The students put up red flags. The police shot in concussion grenades. The students mounted the roofs and shelled them with paving stones. The police charged the barricades. The students replied with molotov cocktails. Before long most of the barricades were in flames. It was warfare without bullets". Quoted in Roberts, "May '68: Legacies and Legends".

<sup>189</sup> Arendt, "Communicative Power", p. 67.

<sup>190</sup> Foucault, "Les intellectuels et le pouvoir", p. 315.

<sup>191</sup> Foucault, "Critical Theory/Intellectual History", p. 43.

<sup>192</sup> Derrida, *Specters of Marx*, pp. 51-55; Akoun, "Entre l'existentialisme et le marxisme".



## *An Archæology of Objectivity and Savoir*

consciousness,<sup>193</sup> it also allows recognition as a philosopher without the attached identity of marxist, phenomenologist or structuralist.<sup>194</sup> 1968 liberates the energy of revolution from the idea of it.<sup>195</sup> As Foucault says, 1968 is the voice of those who struggle at the grass-roots level in the fine meshes of power.<sup>196</sup> Paris echoes to the sound of the mature subject. It is the free speech of the governed, who question those who govern them about the truth.<sup>197</sup> Essentially, 1968 is a refusal by the individual of the government of his everyday life by others. The word on every one's lips, Foucault claims, is *pouvoir*,<sup>198</sup> and Sheridan writes that what "was truly revolutionary was the realization that the state was not sufficiently in one place to be seized, that the state was everywhere and that therefore the 'revolution' had to be ... ubiquitous as well as permanent".<sup>199</sup>

In this respect, 1968 confirms Foucault as a visionary of *pouvoir*.<sup>200</sup> He discerns "an autonomous, non-centralised kind of theoretical production ... whose validity is not dependent on the approval of the established régimes of thought".<sup>201</sup> Foucault now determines to sponsor this local *savoir des gens*,<sup>202</sup> which he juxtaposes with the unitary bodies of theory that claim to be true.<sup>203</sup> What it requires is a departure from a strict archæology, that is, from a description of *savoir* as the sole condition of existence of the objectivity of discursive practices, toward an account of the relation between the non-discursive realm of *pouvoir* that surfaces in 1968 and the *savoir* behind the human sciences. To concretise archæology, Foucault turns from Heidegger to Nietzsche.<sup>204</sup> Despite the fact that *The Archaeology of Knowledge* is Foucault's only systematic theoretical analysis,<sup>205</sup> he shifts from the detachment of archæology to his genealogical commitment to critique.<sup>206</sup> As Rajchman argues, Foucault's use of Nietzsche is a natural outcome of his desire to make Heidegger's

<sup>193</sup> Gutman, "L'avant-mai des philosophes", pp. 29-30.

<sup>194</sup> Foucault, "The Minimalist Self", p. 8.

<sup>195</sup> Gordon, "Question, ethos, event", pp. 20-22.

<sup>196</sup> Foucault, "Truth and Power", p. 116.

<sup>197</sup> Foucault, "An Aesthetics of Existence", pp. 51-52.

<sup>198</sup> Foucault, "Entretien avec Michel Foucault (1978)", pp. 82-83.

<sup>199</sup> Sheridan, *Michel Foucault*, p. 113.

<sup>200</sup> Said, "Foucault and the Imagination of Power", p. 152.

<sup>201</sup> Foucault, "Two Lectures", pp. 78-81.

<sup>202</sup> Foucault, "Cours du 7 janvier 1976", p. 9.

<sup>203</sup> Foucault, "Two Lectures", p. 84.

<sup>204</sup> Rajchman, *Michel Foucault*, pp. 114-116.

<sup>205</sup> Rabinow, "Introduction", p. 9.

<sup>206</sup> Smart, *Michel Foucault*, p. 48.

## *An Archæology of Objectivity and Savoir*

philosophical anti-humanism, which is so central to *The Order of Things*, political. For Rajchman, Foucault's nietzschean turn is driven by a concern with "what are the *politics* of the philosophical problematization of the subject; in what sense is anti-humanist philosophy of *political* importance?"<sup>207</sup>

With his rehabilitation of a kantian analysis of finitude, minus the baggage of the empirico-transcendental *doublet*, Foucault is directed by Nietzsche toward *pouvoir* as the non-discursivity in which objectivity's existence is conditioned.<sup>208</sup> Nietzsche, Foucault notes, "is the philosopher of power, a philosopher who managed to think of power without having to confine himself within a political theory to do so".<sup>209</sup> The battle against humanism's epistemological critique, which ruled until the 1950s but continues to define the present,<sup>210</sup> recommences in respect of its political critique. It is, for example, based on the normative experience that is carried by the rawlsian or taylorian subject, who wills or desires procedural or substantive justice.

Foucault's post-1968 introduction of non-discursive practices as the background to discursive practices, of *pouvoir* as the condition of existence for *savoir*, necessitates several methodologico-conceptual clarifications. In archæology, the objectivity of the episteme derives from *savoir*, and in *The Order of Things* Foucault critiques the modern episteme's discursive practices, the human sciences, which claim to produce truth.<sup>211</sup> The genealogist is interested in both the production of *connaissance* within an episteme, and how truth imposes itself against and over another episteme.<sup>212</sup> Rather than abandon archæology, Foucault uses genealogy to re-order his analytic priorities, which is in line with the demands of 1968 to rethink *engagement*.<sup>213</sup> To be sure, the weighting and conception of each approach changes, but there "is no pre- and post-archaeology or genealogy in Foucault".<sup>214</sup> Instead, after 1970 the archæological analysis of systems of thought, which organise and regulate experience, are placed into the historical problematic of how such systems, which define the experience of the subject, come into existence through contingent historical processes.<sup>215</sup> "Archaeology is the method with which a genealogical

<sup>207</sup> Rajchman, *Michel Foucault*, p. 115.

<sup>208</sup> Foucault, "Le monde est un grand asile", p. 434.

<sup>209</sup> Foucault, "Prison Talk", p. 53.

<sup>210</sup> Foucault, "Par-delà le bien et le mal", p. 236.

<sup>211</sup> Davidson, "Archaeology, Genealogy, Ethics", pp. 221-222.

<sup>212</sup> Meuret, "A political genealogy of political economy", pp. 49-50.

<sup>213</sup> Smart, *Michel Foucault*, p. 47.

<sup>214</sup> Dreyfus and Rabinow, *Michel Foucault*, p. 104.

<sup>215</sup> Toews, "Foucault and the Freudian Subject", p. 127.

## *An Archæology of Objectivity and Savoir*

purpose can be realized ... –the means are archaeological, the ends genealogical”.<sup>216</sup> In Foucault’s words, archæological research incorporates a method and a tactic.<sup>217</sup> Archæology specifies the field, and genealogy targets and finalises an analysis of it. As Foucault says in “The culture of the self”,

[w]hat I mean by archæology is a methodological framework for my analysis. What I mean by genealogy is both the reason and the target of analyzing those discourses as events, and what I am trying to show is how those discursive events have determined in a certain way what constitutes our present and ... ourselves—either our knowledge, our practices, our type of rationality, our relationship to ourselves or to others ... genealogy is the finality of the analysis, and ... archæology ... the material and methodological framework.<sup>218</sup>

If archæology analyses *savoir* rather than man as the condition of existence for discursive practices and the *connaissance* they manifest, by the early 1970s *pouvoir* constitutes the condition of existence of *savoir*. It is in this sense that *pouvoir* and *savoir* are inseparable conceptually, hence the solidus inserted between them in the heuristic device, *pouvoir/savoir*: “the relation is such that knowledge is not gained prior to and independently of the use to which it will be put in order to achieve power ... but is already a function of human interests and power relations”.<sup>219</sup> And, because *pouvoir* produces rather than prevents *savoir*,<sup>220</sup> Foucault inserts *pouvoir* before *savoir*. Objectivity is no longer a function of *savoir*, but of the nietzschean ontology prior to it, *pouvoir*, which is nevertheless operative through discursive practices and manifest as a *volonté de savoir*.<sup>221</sup> In the summary of his first lectures on the history of systems of thought delivered in 1970-1971 at the *Collège de France*, Foucault says that discursive practices delimit a field of objects, define a legitimate perspective for the agent of knowledge and establish norms for the elaboration of concepts and theories. However, in addition to their modes of objectivation and subjectivation, Foucault says,

discursive practices are not purely and simply ways of producing discourses. They are embodied in technical processes, in institutions, in patterns for general behavior ... and in pedagogical forms which, at once, impose and maintain them. ... These principles of exclusion and choice ... are not based on an agent of knowledge (historical or transcendental) who successively invents them or

<sup>216</sup> Racevskis, *Michel Foucault and the Subversion of Intellect*, p. 16.

<sup>217</sup> Foucault, “Two Lectures”, p. 85.

<sup>218</sup> Quoted in Mahon, “Michel Foucault’s archaeology”, p. 135 and p. 140, f. 10.

<sup>219</sup> Hoy, “Power, Repression, Progress”, p. 129.

<sup>220</sup> Foucault, “Body/Power”, p. 59.

<sup>221</sup> Foucault, “La volonté de savoir”, p. 241.

## *An Archaeology of Objectivity and Savoir*

places them on an original footing; rather, they designate a will to knowledge that is anonymous, polymorphous, susceptible to regular transformations, and determined by the play of identifiable dependencies.<sup>222</sup>

Finally, given the relocation of objectivity to a will to knowledge that has *pouvoir/savoir* as its condition of existence, Foucault ceases to speak of the episteme. Instead, objectivity is constituted in, and truth is to be understood as the product of, a *dispositif d'ensemble*, a grid of intelligibility,<sup>223</sup> or, more literally, an apparatus. As Foucault writes,

[w]hat I'm trying to pick out with this term is, firstly, a thoroughly heterogeneous ensemble consisting of discourses, institutions, architectural forms, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements, philosophical, moral and philanthropic propositions—in short, the said as much as the unsaid. ... The apparatus itself is the system of relations that can be established between these elements. Secondly, what I am trying to identify in this apparatus is precisely the nature of the connection that can exist between these heterogeneous elements[,] ... whether discursive or non-discursive, [because] there is a sort of interplay of shifts of position and modifications of function which can ... vary very widely. Thirdly,... the term 'apparatus' ... has as its major function at a given historical moment that of responding to an *urgent need*. ... [It] has a dominant strategic function.<sup>224</sup>

### vi. Synopsis

In this chapter, I have outlined how, in twentieth century French philosophy, an existential and marxist interpretation of the hegelian subject's capacity for transcendental dialectic, and the kantian subject's capacity for transcendental apperception, constitute the empirico-transcendental subject who grounds humanism's epistemological critique. Like his elder brother born from a virgin mother, man wants be the condition of all possibility in the world. He is the transcendental subject of those human sciences which search for empirical *connaissance* of man as an object.

In response to this experience of objectivity at the hands of the subject of anthropological dialectical history, I have presented Foucault's derailment of humanism's path to enlightenment via an archæological critique of the historical *a priori* of *savoir*, which acts as the condition of existence for *connaissance*. As man is

<sup>222</sup> Foucault, "History of Systems of Thought", pp. 199-201.

<sup>223</sup> A grid of intelligibility captures the method of the effective historian, as well as the structure of the cultural practices he examines. Dreyfus and Rabinow, *Michel Foucault*, pp. 120-121.

<sup>224</sup> Foucault, "The Confession of the Flesh", pp. 194-195.

### *An Archæology of Objectivity and Savoir*

untenable as the subject of objectivity, Foucault erases and replaces him with what *philosophische Archäologie* discerns as the counter-human sciences of psychoanalysis and ethnography. On the basis of philology's language as their formal *a priori*, they promise a way to think freely that is purged of transcendental narcissism. Yet, insofar as a post-humanist condition of possibility for objective experience depends on language that is related to *savoir*, I have shown that the archæologist is detached from the *connaissance* in which he is situated, and I have argued that 1968 forces Foucault to back up archæology with genealogy. Non-discursive practices of *pouvoir* become the background historical *a priori* of *savoir*, and by association of discursive practices of *connaissance*, too. The critical historian analyses, as I have just suggested, the *pouvoir/savoir* of an apparatus, in which he uncovers the conditions for objective, normative and subjective experience. In his pursuit of critical thought that brings about enlightenment from as early as the 1960s, Foucault uses Nietzsche to reject a hegelian semantics and to retrieve a kantian analytical object for critique, finitude, which he pictures against a nietzschean ontology of the will to power. On this understanding, it is Foucault's genealogical critique of humanism's normative experience of who we are, and his genealogy of how *pouvoir* is exercised, that I focus on in the next chapter.

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## *A Genealogy of Normativity and Pouvoir*

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For Foucault, Veyne writes, “knowledge is power: it imposes itself, and one imposes it; it does not derive from the nature of ‘things’. It has its limit, however, the present.”<sup>1</sup> So it is that Foucault’s archæological critique of objectivity and *savoir*, which I discussed in the preceding chapter, evolves naturally into a genealogical critique of normativity and *pouvoir* – an evolution, moreover, that is inevitable for a critical thinker concerned with who we are on behalf of how we may become otherwise. Or, because Foucault’s path to enlightenment is nietzschean, his critique confronts limits in order to reach its destination of maturity in the present. In addition to his analysis of humanism’s subject of knowledge, therefore, Foucault’s critical gaze looks to man’s alter ego, the subject of right. From the domain of man’s true being of autonomy and recognition,<sup>2</sup> this subject supports the political critique that advocates the procedural and substantive justice which governs the power of the juridical state, and in this chapter it is the humanist’s practice of critical thought through political critique which I subject to genealogical critique.

I commence with an examination of *Madness and Civilization*. In its exposure of the confined exclusion for those who differ from the moral identities of autonomy and recognition, it first reveals the failures of humanism to realise maturity. From this point of view, I analyse the second moment – archæology is the first – in Foucault’s critical history, genealogy. Via its focus on the capillary *pouvoir* of non-discursive practices, genealogical critique uncovers the conditions which make possible the normative experience – Rawls’ political liberalism or Taylor’s politics of recognition, for instance – that is at the heart of humanism. But although Foucault’s proto-genealogy of madness intimates the themes of objectification and subjection, which genealogical critique subsequently explains in terms of

<sup>1</sup> Veyne, “The Final Foucault and His Ethics”, p. 5.

<sup>2</sup> Foucault, “On Power”, p. 106.

## *A Genealogy of Normativity and Pouvoir*

humanism's political critique, both *Madness and Civilization* and nietzschean genealogy share the first of two assumptions that are found in humanism's theory of power. Firstly, the idea that power is exercised by mechanisms of repression – to which Foucault adheres until the mid-1970s – and, secondly, the nature of juridical power as state-centred. Consequently, I argue that in his 1975-1976 lectures at the *Collège de France* and, thereafter, *The History of Sexuality*, Foucault develops a genealogical critique of extra-judicial capillary *pouvoir*. He demonstrates that *pouvoir* is exercised by mechanisms which are productive of the subject's body and the population. I then substantiate this claim in my discussion of *Discipline and Punish*, where genealogy unearths the technique of examination and the mechanisms of discipline that constitute body or *somato-pouvoir*, and through my analysis of *The History of Sexuality*, in which Foucault excavates the technique of confession and the mechanisms of regulation that foster life or *bio-pouvoir*. Finally, further to this critical question of the means by which *pouvoir* is exercised, which enables Foucault to reject humanism's normative experience that is rendered by its political critique, he starts to think of what constitutes the basic nature of *pouvoir*. It is at this point, during the late 1970s, that Foucault's critical historical critique develops the idea of *pouvoir* as governmentality, which as the intersection of normative and subjective experience signals the transition to chapter 6.

### **5.i. A Proto-Genealogy of Reason's Silent Other**

Insofar as *Discipline and Punish* poses the problem of power and the body, especially the imposition of power on bodies, it is Foucault's first proper genealogy.<sup>3</sup> A decade and a half earlier, *Madness and Civilization* appeared, which as Foucault later concedes brings him "close to admitting an anonymous and general subject of history".<sup>4</sup> Further, the attempt to escape academic philosophy in *Madness and Civilization* now embarrasses Foucault, as does its remnants of hegelianism.<sup>5</sup> Clearly, it is neither a genealogy nor, strictly speaking, an archæology. Foucault's employment of the methods of existential analysis,<sup>6</sup> and his search for the true psychology of man,<sup>7</sup> betray a realist approach to history. His critical words presume

<sup>3</sup> Bouchard, "Introduction", p. 25.

<sup>4</sup> Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, p. 16. *Madness and Civilization* (1965), which I draw on, was first published in 1961 as *Folie et déraison: Histoire de la folie à l'âge classique*, and unabridged in 1972 as *Histoire de la folie à l'âge classique*.

<sup>5</sup> Foucault, "The Functions of Literature", p. 312.

<sup>6</sup> Foucault, "Preface to *The History of Sexuality*, Volume II", p. 334.

<sup>7</sup> Bernauer, "Michel Foucault's Ecstatic Thinking", p. 46.

### *A Genealogy of Normativity and Pouvoir*

the existence of a thing called madness beneath the discursive practice of psychiatry. As a result, *Madness and Civilization* receives diverse interpretations, from Dreyfus' and Rabinow's claim that Foucault flirts with hermeneutic depth,<sup>8</sup> or Hacking's suggestion that it is an "almost Kantian story in which our experience of the mad is a mere phenomenon conditioned by our thought",<sup>9</sup> to Hayden White's argument that, with its 1950s themes of the end of history and the philosophy of the subject, *Madness and Civilization* represents an eschatological structuralism.<sup>10</sup> Nonetheless, its theme of the confined exclusion that mirrors the historical consolidation of reason places *Madness and Civilization* at the forefront, albeit in proto-form, of a genealogical critique of normative experience, which justifies its place in this chapter.<sup>11</sup>

Lest it be forgotten, Foucault's critical history of systems of thought investigates the interdependence of the modes of objectivation and subjectivation. They give rise to the objective, normative and subjective games of truth through which "human beings are made subjects".<sup>12</sup> Foucault examines how, in relation to *savoir*, *pouvoir* and ethico-morality—the modes of objectivation—subjectivation is effected *qua* the constitution of subjects of knowledge, subjects who act on others, and subjects who are moral agents.<sup>13</sup> A genealogy of *pouvoir/savoir* allows "the analysis ... of the problem of relationships between [sic] subject and games of truth".<sup>14</sup> Although evident in a confused manner, Foucault says that all three axes of *savoir*, *pouvoir* and ethico-morality appear in *Madness and Civilization*.<sup>15</sup> It can thus be read from the point of view of objectivity, normativity or subjectivity, but given that the relative importance of each differs according to the experience analysed,<sup>16</sup> I follow Foucault, who links it to the axis of *pouvoir* and the theme of confined exclusion.<sup>17</sup> As he says, *Madness and Civilization* investigates "the type of power that

<sup>8</sup> Dreyfus and Rabinow, *Michel Foucault*, p. 12.

<sup>9</sup> Hacking, "The Archaeology of Foucault", p. 29.

<sup>10</sup> H. V. White, "Foucault Decoded: Notes from Underground", in *History and Theory*, 12, 1973, quoted in Major-Poetzl, *Michel Foucault's Archaeology of Western Culture*, p. 121.

<sup>11</sup> Foucault, "Conversation avec Michel Foucault", pp. 182-183. *Madness and Civilization* establishes the extra-discursive dependence between the discursive practice of psychiatry and non-discursive practices (in 1968, Foucault calls the latter *changements économiques, politiques et sociaux*), whilst *The Order of Things* analyses the inter-discursive dependence between the physical and empirical sciences, philosophical critique and the human sciences. Foucault, "Réponse à une question", p. 680.

<sup>12</sup> Foucault, "The Subject and Power", p. 208.

<sup>13</sup> Foucault, "On the Genealogy of Ethics", p. 351.

<sup>14</sup> Foucault, "The ethic of the care for the self", p. 10.

<sup>15</sup> Foucault, "On the Genealogy of Ethics", p. 352.

<sup>16</sup> Foucault, "Preface to *The History of Sexuality*, Volume II", pp. 336-337.

<sup>17</sup> Foucault, "Les rapports de pouvoir passent à l'intérieur des corps", p. 229.



## *A Genealogy of Normativity and Pouvoir*

reason has ceaselessly wanted to exercise over madness from the seventeenth century to the present".<sup>18</sup>

In 1953, after only three years as a member of the *PCF*, Foucault leaves in protest at its anti-semitism, the stalinist orientation of its communistological marxists, who read Marx according to the dictates of the *PCF*,<sup>19</sup> and the fact that, in spite of itself, the *PCF* clings to the bourgeois life,<sup>20</sup> whilst it thwarts research into the political function of science and the idea of a disciplinary society.<sup>21</sup> Foucault then proceeds to write the archæology of the silence that lies beneath the ruthless language of non-madness, psychiatry.<sup>22</sup> As reason's monologue on madness, psychiatry sustains the normativity which, although it allows one to communicate with and recognise another, requires the denouncement of one's neighbour. *Madness and Civilization* is not a history of mental illness, but a nominalist history of the economic, political, ideological and institutional conditions which effect the confined exclusion of those who are constituted as discursive objects by philosophy *qua* discourse of reason, and psychiatry *qua* discourse of reason's frontiers.<sup>23</sup>

Foucault locates the undifferentiated experience of madness and reason, or what he calls the zero point, between the disappearance of leprosy in the fourteenth century and the renaissance of the seventeenth century.<sup>24</sup> In this period, he describes the diverse but always co-existent experience of reason and madness, which are interrelated by the idea of folly:<sup>25</sup> the ship of fools, the *Narrenschiff*, that sails up and down Europe's rivers with its cargo of madmen in search of their reason from water,<sup>26</sup> and particularly the ocean, which harbours symbolic powers of purification;<sup>27</sup> or, in the sixteenth century, the madman, in whom man's animal nature periodically bursts forth to reveal his original ontological place with things; or the intimate relation in renaissance literature of reason as a folly that is identified

<sup>18</sup> "[L]e type de pouvoir que la raison n'a pas cessé de vouloir exercer sur la folie depuis le XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle jusqu'à notre époque". Foucault, "Pouvoir et savoir", p. 402.

<sup>19</sup> Foucault, "Prison Talk", pp. 52-53.

<sup>20</sup> Macey, *The Lives of Michel Foucault*, p. 40.

<sup>21</sup> Foucault, "Truth and Power", p. 109; Foucault, "Prisons et asiles", pp. 523-525.

<sup>22</sup> Foucault, *Madness and Civilization*, pp. xi-xiii. Although Foucault speaks for the first time of archæology in *Madness and Civilization*, he does so simply "to distinguish what he is doing from 'history'". Sheridan, *Michel Foucault*, p. 14.

<sup>23</sup> Sheridan, *Michel Foucault*, p. 12; Foucault, "Les monstruosités de la critique", pp. 222-223.

<sup>24</sup> Foucault, *Madness and Civilization*, pp. 3-8.

<sup>25</sup> Sheridan, *Michel Foucault*, pp. 16-17.

<sup>26</sup> Foucault, *Madness and Civilization*, pp. 9-15

<sup>27</sup> Foucault, "L'eau et la folie", pp. 268-269.

## *A Genealogy of Normativity and Pouvoir*

with romance.<sup>28</sup> Before the cartesian subject, Foucault implies, madness is not the denigrated other of reason, but one of its significant others that is to be respected.

In 1656, five years after Hobbes publishes *Leviathan*, the *hôpital général* in Paris is founded and with it the classical epoch's experience of madness. The mad are moved off the *Narrenschiffen* into the *hôpitaux généraux*, and voyages to retrieve reason are succeeded from the second half of the seventeenth century by confinement, which characterises the renaissance experience of madness.<sup>29</sup> What Foucault calls the great confinement of the mad to the non-medical, semi-juridical structure of the *hôpitaux généraux* is the product of economic measures and a requisite social sensibility, which is constituted by the bourgeoisie and instituted by the police *qua* gatekeepers of the community's morality.<sup>30</sup>

Madness now represents the impossibility of the other for rational thought. It alienates man *qua* cartesian subject, who is duty bound to uphold the sovereignty of reason over against folly.<sup>31</sup> Also, the establishment of the *ratio* is inextricably bound up with the *ethos* of mediæval christianity's morality, such that madness-evil and reason-good assume a natural affiliation.<sup>32</sup> A bourgeois normativity that is a synthesis of moral obligation and sovereign right castigates the madman, the economically inactive and the unreasonable, from blasphemers to libertines.<sup>33</sup> Through them, the classical age sketches a profile of its other experience of unreason and immorality, which is enforced by the new administrators of normativity in the *polis*, the police. "In the shadows of the bourgeois city", Foucault writes, "is born this strange republic of the good which is imposed by force on all those suspected of belonging to evil. This is the underside of the bourgeoisie's great dream ... in the classical age".<sup>34</sup>

For Foucault, confinement in the classical epoch on the basis of insanity, passion or delirium, which signal the madman's incapacity for the responsibilities of reason,<sup>35</sup> is indicative of the doctor's presence, who first connects madness to the body in terms of mania, melancholia, hysteria and hypochondria.<sup>36</sup> Madness as the

<sup>28</sup> Foucault, *Madness and Civilization*, pp. 16-37.

<sup>29</sup> Foucault, *Madness and Civilization*, pp. 39-45.

<sup>30</sup> Foucault, *Madness and Civilization*, pp. 46-59.

<sup>31</sup> Sheridan, *Michel Foucault*, p. 23.

<sup>32</sup> Racevskis, *Michel Foucault and the Subversion of Intellect*, pp. 43-44.

<sup>33</sup> Foucault, *Madness and Civilization*, p. 65.

<sup>34</sup> Foucault, *Madness and Civilization*, pp. 60-61.

<sup>35</sup> Foucault, *Madness and Civilization*, pp. 66-99.

<sup>36</sup> Foucault, *Madness and Civilization*, ch. V.

### *A Genealogy of Normativity and Pouvoir*

empty negativity of reason and the madman as non-being, nothingness<sup>37</sup> – a slight at Sartre – define its essence as a physical disease of the nerves. Although the madman's unreason is not yet tantamount to a lack of truth, nor definitive of the truth of his being,<sup>38</sup> Foucault alludes to a panic in the thirty years prior to 1789. The medical condition and moral stigma of madness confronts the city as the new leprosy. It ushers in *homo medicus* as the saviour, who neutralises the disease to protect the normal. He is, Foucault suggests, helped by the enlightenment's darkened mirror of humanism, which chronicles the historical progress of reason in terms of the experience of unreason. It is held culpable for the unconditioned return and submersion of anthropocentric dialectical thought.

Man's relation to madness is now mediated temporally, socially and historically, and madness is the barometer of the distance man has from his essence as a subject of reason.<sup>39</sup> Together with socio-economic shifts and increased levels of poverty during the nineteenth century, the madman is declared unbearable to reason. Inside the *hôpitaux généraux*, his presence is an insult to other confinees, who in the years immediately after 1789 are liberated.<sup>40</sup> Psychiatry, which recognises madness in its truth as an illness and treats it as a curable disease, implores the house of unreason, the asylum. Therein, the object of the discursive practice of psychiatry, the madman, is constituted as a subject, who the psychiatrist pretends to liberate in the name of reason.

According to Foucault, the asylum is a retreat outside time, in which the mad are to recover their reason through meditation on, and the recognition and self-incrimination of, their madness.<sup>41</sup> To aid silence, recognition and judgement as the cures for madness, as the *ethos* that re-establishes the *ratio*, the doctor who commands the modern experience of madness as a mental disease is affirmed. But *homo medicus'* apotheosis is unrelated to his medical skill or power as a practitioner of *connaissance*. Rather, *homo medicus* enjoys authority because he is a wise man with a medical heritage. He is the juridico-moral guarantee to those outside the asylum. The civilisation that rests on reason juxtaposes its normativity with madness as a disease, and the excluded confinees in the asylum act as the condition for the imperative of reason in the city of the normal. In effect,

<sup>37</sup> Foucault, *Madness and Civilization*, pp. 115-116.

<sup>38</sup> Foucault, *Madness and Civilization*, ch. VI.

<sup>39</sup> Foucault, *Madness and Civilization*, pp. 199-220.

<sup>40</sup> Foucault, *Madness and Civilization*, ch. VIII.

<sup>41</sup> Foucault, *Madness and Civilization*, pp. 243-268.

## *A Genealogy of Normativity and Pouvoir*

[t]he asylum ... organized [guilt] for the madman as a consciousness of himself, and as a non-reciprocal relation to the keeper; it organized it for the man of reason as an awareness of the Other, a therapeutic intervention in the madman's existence. In other words, by this guilt the madman became an object of punishment always vulnerable to himself and to the Other; and, ... from the awareness of his guilt, the madman was to return to his awareness of himself as a free and responsible subject, and consequently to reason.<sup>42</sup>

In *The Order of Things*, Foucault speaks of the potential for a post-humanist philosophy in virtue of the presence, in psychoanalysis and ethnography, of philology's formal *a priori* of language. Similarly, at the end of *Madness and Civilization* Foucault considers psychoanalysis and a critique of finitude as alternatives to the pseudo-scientificity of psychiatry and anthropocentric dialectical thought, which require confined exclusion to function.<sup>43</sup> Yet, whilst psychoanalysis accesses some forms of madness as a freudian science of the unconscious,<sup>44</sup> it remains a stranger to unreason, which other than lightning-flashes in the likes of Nietzsche has been lost as an experience since the zero point.<sup>45</sup> Philosophically, Foucault's main culprit for this loss is Hegel's demonstration-by-absurdity thought, which leads critique away from Nietzsche's retrieval of archaic thought.<sup>46</sup> Already in 1963, the attraction for Foucault of what he later calls *philosophische Archäologie* – which I discussed in section 4.iv. – is its ability to analyse kantian archival thought, the historical *a priori* for philosophical critique.<sup>47</sup> Does the dialectic give birth to the first man who moves toward freedom, Foucault asks, or is it the final convulsion of the last dying man at the dusk of the renaissance?<sup>48</sup> Given that the great confinement and the asylum appropriate people as mere things in the service of modern normativity, *Geist's* presence blocks the exit to maturity first illuminated by *Aufklärung*. What *Madness and Civilization* demonstrates, in the shape of the normative control of those who are different, is the reason behind juridical power and the power of reason, for the asylum “was not a free domain of observation, diagnosis and therapy; it was a juridical space where one was accused, judged and sentenced, and from which one was released only ... by repentance”.<sup>49</sup>

<sup>42</sup> Foucault, *Madness and Civilization*, p. 247.

<sup>43</sup> Foucault, “Philosophie et psychologie”, pp. 438-439.

<sup>44</sup> Foucault, “Philosophie et psychologie”, pp. 440-441.

<sup>45</sup> Foucault, *Madness and Civilization*, pp. 269-278.

<sup>46</sup> Foucault, *Madness and Civilization*, pp. 287-289.

<sup>47</sup> Foucault, “Guetter le jour qui vient”, pp. 267-268.

<sup>48</sup> Foucault, *Madness and Civilization*, pp. 279-283.

<sup>49</sup> Foucault, *Madness and Civilization*, p. 269.

## *A Genealogy of Normativity and Pouvoir*

### 5.ii. Genealogical Critique

Like archæology, Foucault's proto-genealogy is an attempt to establish possibilities. Rather than propose, these critical histories problematise the foundational subject and his other, both of whom are central to epistemological critique.<sup>50</sup> They are successful as a critique of anthropocentric dialectical thought, and from the early 1970s Foucault develops a genealogy proper of humanist normativity. It establishes that truth is less the prerogative of the subject of right, who justifies the political critique that orders power, than the effect of domination. Truth in procedural and substantive justice reflects might, and my purpose in this section is to outline Foucault's genealogical critique. It can be contrasted with humanism's notion of history, which authorises the constitutional juridical state in virtue of its origin in a social contract that protects autonomy, or of its emergence and descent from hypergoods that are central to recognition.

If history makes the past familiar and the present inadvertently subject to the normal,<sup>51</sup> genealogy reveals what has historically been thought but typically forgotten.<sup>52</sup> It recuperates voices silenced and naturalised by reason.<sup>53</sup> A human science such as psychoanalysis, for example, can be said to intersect with, and have components inherited from, the discursive practices of confession and nineteenth century psychology, and the institution of the asylum (which in turn combines components from the hospital and the seventeenth century discursive practices of cures and internment).<sup>54</sup> In union with this erudite knowledge, the genealogist recovers local memories to establish an historical knowledge of struggles, which he employs tactically in the present to challenge normativity.<sup>55</sup> Instead of epistemological foundations, genealogy elucidates the origin of the rational and the bearer of truth, the subject, in domination and the relation of force—that is, at the micro-level of capillary *pouvoir*.<sup>56</sup>

It is in the essay, "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History", that Foucault elaborates his genealogical critique, or the "grey ... and patiently documentary ... [analysis that] ... operates on a field of entangled and confused parchments ... scratched

<sup>50</sup> Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, p. 114.

<sup>51</sup> Macherey, "Towards a natural history of norms", pp. 177-178.

<sup>52</sup> Hutchings, "Foucault and International Relations Theory", p. 104.

<sup>53</sup> Bouchard, "Introduction", p. 18.

<sup>54</sup> Noujain, "History as Genealogy", pp. 160-165; Toews, "Foucault and the Freudian Subject", pp. 122-126; Meuret, "A political genealogy of political economy", pp. 51-55.

<sup>55</sup> Foucault, "Two Lectures", p. 83.

<sup>56</sup> Davidson, "Archaeology, Genealogy, Ethics", p. 225.

### *A Genealogy of Normativity and Pouvoir*

over ... many times".<sup>57</sup> À la Nietzsche, Foucault opposes the historian's search for an origin (*Ursprung*), which enjoys the status of a primordial truth. For the genealogist, history reveals that there is no timeless essence of the origin, but only the difference of things in scattered, accidental historical beginnings.<sup>58</sup> To oppose the historian's search for the soul of history in terms of a unique origin of truth, the genealogist demonstrates that truth is the sort of error which can only not be refuted because of the long baking process of history.<sup>59</sup> The genealogist, who opposes the assimilation and equalisation that depends on an origin, makes scant reference to the finality of an event in the present. He encourages estrangement from the past: genealogy is grey, but "I forgot to say that such philosophers are cheerful and that they like to sit in the abyss below a perfectly clear sky".<sup>60</sup>

Foucault's genealogical critique of normativity that rests on truth is also supported by the concepts of descent (*Herkunft*) and emergence (*Entstehung*). In the historian's hands, descent amalgamates the resemblance and foundational character of traits and concepts in the present, which are found in a myriad of historical events. For the genealogist, descent highlights the infinite origins contained within traits and concepts, which he uses to critique homogeneous concepts. The subject's coherent identity after the process of recognition, for instance, is exposed as an empty synthesis by the genealogist's liberation of lost events. In particular, Foucault argues that the human body is the inscribed surface of the events that determine history.<sup>61</sup> One should not, Foucault writes, denounce the neglect of being by incorporeally oriented epistemological critique, but its silence about extra-being, or the body.<sup>62</sup>

Whilst a genealogy of descent focuses on the reality of the body's inscriptions and cautions against the progressive continuity of anthropocentrism, Foucault employs the concept of emergence to reject suggestions that a concept—*Geist*, for example—has an historical endpoint. The historian, who reflects current needs onto the origin, treats concepts in the present as a culmination in the emergence of normativity, whereas Foucault's application of emergence posits concepts as products of the hazardous play of domination.<sup>63</sup> Concepts analysed through

<sup>57</sup> Foucault, "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History", p. 139.

<sup>58</sup> Foucault, "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History", pp. 139-142.

<sup>59</sup> Foucault, "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History", pp. 143-145.

<sup>60</sup> Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, § 988 and § 990, pp. 516-517.

<sup>61</sup> Foucault, "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History", pp. 145-148.

<sup>62</sup> Foucault, "Theatrum Philosophicum", pp. 170-172.

<sup>63</sup> Foucault, "Nietzsche, la généalogie, l'histoire", p. 145.

## *A Genealogy of Normativity and Pouvoir*

emergence are the result of a relation of force that is reconstructed by genealogy. Rather than discern the rational and its delivery to the actual, the genealogist highlights the price of the rational to the actuality of the subject. Foucault calls this discourse of resistance, which is regulated and neutralised by humanism,<sup>64</sup> *l'historicisme politique*.<sup>65</sup> The genealogist's analysis of historical politics demonstrates that,

as soon as we enter the relations of power, we are neither in the realms of right or sovereignty but domination, which is an historically elusive and indescribably rich relation of domination that we cannot escape from—hence, we cannot escape history.<sup>66</sup>

Genealogy is curative, not contemplative. It is medicinal rather than philosophical, and it affirms that truth is a question of perspective.<sup>67</sup> Armed with his analytical concepts of origin, descent and emergence, which give the genealogist an eye for real effective history, Foucault renders historical politics as a theatre of *pouvoir*. In it, a play of domination is endlessly repeated on a stage that is characterised by a specific relation of force, which is neither a struggle among juridical subjects, nor the energy generated when the strong encounter revolutionary subjects. Instead, the stage of the relation of force is where adversaries who are strangers to each other meet and compete to direct the play of domination, which is based on a script that follows the available system of rules.

Normativity originates in a relation of force and takes its meaning from the concept of event. For the historian, event signals inferior, unthinkable history, whilst for Foucault event is the parchments and documents which are crucial for genealogical interpretation.<sup>68</sup> Latently, event resembles the concept of chance, which is re-ified into an event through the attempt to master chance by the will to power.<sup>69</sup> If domination is transformed by a usurpation of power, or the decadence

<sup>64</sup> Fontana and Bertani, "Situation du cours", p. 256.

<sup>65</sup> Foucault, "Cours du 18 février 1976", pp. 144-146.

<sup>66</sup> "[D]ès que l'on a affaire à des rapports de pouvoir, on n'est pas dans le droit et on n'est pas dans la souveraineté; on est dans la domination, on est dans ce rapport historiquement indéfini, indéfiniment épais et multiple de domination. On ne sort pas de la domination, donc on ne sort pas de l'histoire". Foucault, "Cours du 4 février 1976", p. 96.

<sup>67</sup> Foucault, "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History", pp. 155-157.

<sup>68</sup> Foucault, "Truth and Power", pp. 113-114.

<sup>69</sup> Foucault, "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History", p. 155. The event is indicative of the actual in the present that develops out of the struggle of difference in the relation of force. Foucault describes the event's birth to presence in terms of a throw of the dice, which is both the chance within the game (of domination) and the game itself as chance (that depends on the relation of force). Foucault, "Entretien avec Michel Foucault (1976)", p. 145; Foucault, "Theatrum Philosophicum", pp. 194-195.

### *A Genealogy of Normativity and Pouvoir*

of a sterile play of domination that allows the dominated other to recontest the relation of force,<sup>70</sup> the event gives an insight into its reversal.<sup>71</sup> As Sheridan argues, the event “occurs in material elements and consists of their relation, coexistence, dispersion, accumulation, selection. The event must be seen, paradoxically, in terms of ‘a materialism of the incorporeal’”.<sup>72</sup> In short, Foucault uses the event to disable truth, which sustains normative experience in a play of domination,<sup>73</sup> and the genealogist portrays the series of interpretations of each play of domination and its normative system of rules as the effect of the event.

And this is what I would call genealogy, that is, a form of history which can account for the constitution of knowledges, discourses, domains of objects etc., without having to make reference to a subject which is either transcendental in relation to the field of events or runs in its empty sameness throughout the course of history.<sup>74</sup>

Foucault’s genealogical critique can be juxtaposed with the subordination of history to philosophy since platonic metaphysics. This tradition of humanism inverts the relationships of will and knowledge in order to ground the objectivity of the latter in the universality of the knowing subject and his will.<sup>75</sup> In contrast to Plato’s modalities of history – recognition, the diachronic autonomous subject, and a knowledge of truth – genealogy parodies, opposes and sacrifices each one, respectively. Genealogy’s concern is what is? (*pouvoir/savoir*), not who is? (the subject),<sup>76</sup> and the recuperation of the event provides a counter-memory of more individualised, concrete identities, which parody those of recognition. Also, counter-memory opposes the continuous identity of the transcendental subject with multiple events that cannot be mastered by synthesis.<sup>77</sup> Finally, genealogy sacrifices man, who wears a mask of neutrality and commitment to truth.

If, since Aristotle, the will in the will to know has designated a natural, universal desire to know,<sup>78</sup> then it is with Nietzsche that a more fundamental mode of being which is prior to it, namely, the will to power, first materialises. Foucault’s

<sup>70</sup> Foucault, “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History”, pp. 152-154.

<sup>71</sup> Foucault, “Nietzsche, la généalogie, l’histoire”, p. 148.

<sup>72</sup> Sheridan, *Michel Foucault*, p. 129.

<sup>73</sup> Foucault, “Theatrum Philosophicum”, p. 168.

<sup>74</sup> Foucault, “Truth and Power”, p. 117.

<sup>75</sup> Foucault, “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History”, pp. 158-160.

<sup>76</sup> Foucault, “Theatrum Philosophicum”, p. 182 and p. 167.

<sup>77</sup> Foucault, “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History”, pp. 160-162.

<sup>78</sup> Foucault, “La volonté de savoir”, p. 243.



## *A Genealogy of Normativity and Pouvoir*

nietzscheanism captures this with his idea of *pouvoir*, in which the will to know is neither the autonomous subject's authentic being, nor man's desire for self-actualisation through recognition. Instead, Foucault's concept of will (to know) denotes each will to power on the stage of the relation of force within the play of domination. Moreover, this will also establishes truth in the world, or *connaissance* from *pouvoir/savoir*. With regard to the relation of force, the grid of intelligibility,<sup>79</sup> Foucault says that humanity:

does not gradually progress from combat to combat until it arrives at universal reciprocity, where the rule of law finally replaces warfare; humanity installs each of its violences in a system of rules and thus proceeds from domination to domination.<sup>80</sup>

With the historicisation of the subject in *pouvoir/savoir*, the will to know is exposed as a function of events.<sup>81</sup> Normative justice derives from *connaissance* which is effectively the revenge of the will to know that triumphs in the relation of force.<sup>82</sup> In contrast to the historian's disclosure of an eternal will to freedom in philosophy,<sup>83</sup> Nietzsche is first to separate the problem of freedom from the problem of the subject's acquisition of the truth about himself. He makes the will to truth conscious of itself as a problem. Foucault's genealogy continues this philosophy<sup>84</sup>—the will to know gives meaning to history in terms of truth, yet truth is forged by and employed on behalf of the will to power as normativity—but Foucault's philosophy is “a theater of mime with multiple, fugitive, and instantaneous scenes in which blind gestures signal to each other ... as masks”.<sup>85</sup> Despite the endeavours of humanism to link justice to a form of knowledge which is independent of power and indicative of the ideas that order the world, genealogy demonstrates that the truth which authorises political critique is the outcome of a prior relation of force.<sup>86</sup> Right is therefore the effect of might, and because “one should value more than truth the force that forms [and] ... shapes”,<sup>87</sup> truth's cohabitation with *pouvoir/savoir* defines the object of analysis for the genealogist

<sup>79</sup> Foucault, “Cours du 17 mars 1976”, p. 213.

<sup>80</sup> Foucault, “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History”, p. 151.

<sup>81</sup> Foucault, “Nietzsche, la généalogie, l'histoire”, p. 155.

<sup>82</sup> Foucault, “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History”, pp. 162-164 and p. 163, f. 60.

<sup>83</sup> Foucault, “History of Systems of Thought”, pp. 202-203.

<sup>84</sup> Rajchman, *Michel Foucault*, pp. 120-121.

<sup>85</sup> Foucault, “Theatrum Philosophicum”, p. 196.

<sup>86</sup> Foucault, “History of Systems of Thought”, p. 204.

<sup>87</sup> Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, § 602, p. 324.

intent on how to think and act freely.

### 5.iii. Foucault's Critique of the Power of Normative Experience

If genealogy demonstrates that the muse of history, Clio, is forever clutching at events—except when the owl of Minerva is allowed to cloak Clio in its wings<sup>88</sup>—*Madness and Civilization* ushers in from the stage wings of the play of domination those who are excluded by humanism from Minerva's flight and confined to smooth the owl's take-off. Foucault's proto-genealogy of reason's silent other is not, as McNay suggests, an account of the total bankruptcy of enlightenment rationality.<sup>89</sup> Instead, and after Kant, it is a history of reason *qua* critique of its conditions of possibility for normative experience. Nonetheless, although *Madness and Civilization* is only a proto-genealogy, it is Foucault's first articulation of the price of humanist normativity. As I have just argued, genealogy continues this theme with its treatment of truth as the mask each actor wears in the relation of force, where the triumphant will to know determines the normativity that dominates the theatre of *pouvoir*. Still, Foucault's proto-genealogy of madness, as well as his nietzschean genealogy of the early 1970s, share the humanist view that power is exercised by mechanisms of repression,<sup>90</sup> and in this section and the next I detail Foucault's genealogical critique of humanism's theory of power via the idea that *pouvoir* is exercised by productive mechanisms, which takes him beyond humanism.

In humanist critical thought, Foucault argues, the history of reason describes the manifestation of normativity in the skeletal power of the juridical state.<sup>91</sup> Yet the problem with political critique which presumes truth is the vehicle of man's maturity that, as political liberty, is *a priori* to power, or, as political liberation, is *a posteriori* to it, is its theory of power. As a form of critical thought that is based on a prior objectification, or the subject of right, this theory merely imitates epistemological critique with its subject of knowledge who orders things. Political critique gives recourse "to ways of thinking about power based on legal models, that is: What legitimates power? [o]r ... on institutional models, that is: What is the

<sup>88</sup> Noujain, "History as Genealogy", p. 174.

<sup>89</sup> McNay, *Foucault*, pp. 71-75.

<sup>90</sup> Foucault, "Truth and Power", p. 118. However, Foucault says that mechanisms of repression were "adequate to my purpose in *Madness and Civilisation* ... since madness is a special case—during the Classical age power over madness was ... exercised in the form of exclusion", which only strikes Foucault as conceptually problematic "during the course of a concrete experience ... with prisons, starting in 1971-2". Foucault, "The History of Sexuality", pp. 183-184.

<sup>91</sup> Foucault, "Truth and Power", p. 119.

## *A Genealogy of Normativity and Pouvoir*

state?"<sup>92</sup> Humanism's theory of the nature and mechanisms of power presumes what Foucault calls economism: in the liberal model, there is a formal isomorphism between man and the society he contracts into, which leads to the valorisation of right as a normative framework; in the marxist model, economism entails the functional subordination of the economy to the state, hence the value of revolution.<sup>93</sup> In either case, political critique assumes that state power is exercised by mechanisms of repression which prohibit, deny and occlude.<sup>94</sup>

The liberal social contract model presumes an exchange of power between men who possess it equally and *a priori*, which is exemplified by Hobbes' analysis of the state of non-difference (nature) in terms of *pouvoir*.<sup>95</sup> Therein is the aleatory relation of force, which Hobbes defines as the state of war and Foucault calls an infinite diplomacy of egalitarian rivalry.<sup>96</sup> The subject's will is constituted on the stage of the relation of force, whilst in the play of domination the subject both encounters others with the same will and experiences fear. Foucault says there is a will-fear-sovereignty continuum of legitimacy: *Leviathan's* sovereignty is engendered by the fear of death and grounded in a universal will.<sup>97</sup>

Ultimately, the authority of Hobbes' *Leviathan* prospers so long as domination and its *a priori* condition, the relation of force, are kept at bay by *Leviathan's* authority over the subject.<sup>98</sup> The fear characteristic of domination is exchanged for the fear of the repressive mechanisms of *Leviathan's* power. In so doing, Hobbes transposes the problem of domination into a political theory, which is oriented towards state institutions and power as an expression of right, while he excludes from politics any conception of the relation of force.<sup>99</sup> Given that, for the genealogist, there is an isomorphism between *pouvoir's* normative play of

<sup>92</sup> Foucault, "The Subject and Power", p. 209.

<sup>93</sup> Foucault, "Two Lectures", pp. 88-89.

<sup>94</sup> Foucault, "The History of Sexuality", pp. 183-184.

<sup>95</sup> Foucault, "Cours du 4 février 1976", pp. 77-78.

<sup>96</sup> Foucault, "Cours du 4 février 1976", p. 80.

<sup>97</sup> Foucault, "Cours du 4 février 1976", pp. 82-84.

<sup>98</sup> Hobbes' ontological condition, in which man's will to appetite and aversion causes him to desire pleasure and avoid pain, relates one man to another in terms of competition, diffidence and glory. This requires men to use violence to master and defend themselves from others, and to coerce recognition from others' "trifles or misrecognition" of oneself. Hobbes defines these intersubjective relations as the condition of war, which "consisteth not in Battell onely, or the act of fighting; but in a tract of time, wherein the Will to content by Battell is sufficiently known". However, as Nietzsche points out, Hobbes wrongly suggests that the Will to content by Battell is a consequence of man's will to appetite and aversion, when in fact pleasure and pain are epiphenomena of the ontologically prior will to power. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, pp. 185-186; Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, § 702, p. 373.

<sup>99</sup> Foucault, "Cours du 4 février 1976", p. 85.

### *A Genealogy of Normativity and Pouvoir*

domination and the will to power in the relation of force,<sup>100</sup> Foucault claims that a social body constituted by the universality of wills is a great fantasy. It ignores the fact that the social body is an effect not of consensus, but of the materiality of *pouvoir* that operates on the body.<sup>101</sup>

Although humanism's second theory of power opposes the liberal tradition,<sup>102</sup> it is also based on the cartesian subject. A marxist theory of power suggests that the ideology of the dominant social contractors, who monopolise the state, infiltrates the subject's consciousness. Ideology, which is false because it is a truth produced in the name of the class who controls the economic base of power, is contrasted with the truth free of the determinations of power that drives political critique.<sup>103</sup> Marx's heirs at the Frankfurt School, for example, promote a dialectic between reason and domination that culminates, *a propos* of the truth, in revolution, whence undistorted recognition.<sup>104</sup>

Despite the similarities between foucauldian discipline and weberian rationalisation,<sup>105</sup> or, indeed, between Foucault's account of domination and gramscian hegemony,<sup>106</sup> the conception of a subject, whose capacity of reason defines freedom independently of domination, means that for adherents of the Frankfurt School freedom's other of power is dialectically overcome. In contrast, Foucault's genealogy locates truth inside the theatre of *pouvoir*,<sup>107</sup> and it notes the struggles in the relation of force.<sup>108</sup> Also, his conception of governmentality posits freedom as the *vis-à-vis*, rather than the other, of *pouvoir*. Ironically, the marxist theory of power that emphasises domination at the level of consciousness shares the weakness of Hobbes localisation of politics in the institutions of the state. Marxism overlooks the way that *pouvoir* works on the subject's body, which is precisely what 1968 brings into focus.<sup>109</sup>

Like apparently all things before the death of God and man, the magnificence of the humanist conception of power is its simplicity. Political critique assumes that

<sup>100</sup> Miller, *La Passion Foucault*, p. 229 and p. 493, f. 132.

<sup>101</sup> Foucault, "Body/Power", p. 55.

<sup>102</sup> As Gordon argues, Marx's theory of power critiques the social contract tradition's "benign sociological model of power as the agency of social cohesion and normality, serving to assure the conditions of existence of the community". Gordon, "Afterword", p. 234.

<sup>103</sup> Foucault, "Truth and Power", p. 118.

<sup>104</sup> Gordon, "Afterword", pp. 233-235.

<sup>105</sup> Dews, *Logics of Disintegration*, pp. 150-153.

<sup>106</sup> Smart, "The Politics of Truth", pp. 159-160.

<sup>107</sup> Dews, *Logics of Disintegration*, pp. 156-161; Hoy, "Power, Repression, Progress", pp. 132-133.

<sup>108</sup> Smart, "The Politics of Truth", pp. 162-163.

<sup>109</sup> Foucault, "Body/Power", pp. 57-58.

### *A Genealogy of Normativity and Pouvoir*

“only those who keep their distance from power, ... shut up in their Cartesian *poêle*, ... only they can discover the truth”.<sup>110</sup> As a result, Foucault writes that the question of the nature and exercise of power, which originates with the *philosophe*, continues to haunt critical thought as a juridical theory of repressive, state-centred power. It asks “what is the sovereign?, how is he constituted as sovereign? what bond of obedience ties individuals to the sovereign?”.<sup>111</sup> Foucault’s point is that to pose the question of power solely in terms of the juridical state simply underwrites a homogenous schema of repressive, thou-shalt-not power, which can only be transgressed.

Humanism’s theory of an undifferentiated power leads to a double subjectivisation,<sup>112</sup> for when the great Superego,<sup>113</sup> the state, pronounces law, speaks the truth and prohibits, power is conceived as an absolute subject. Alternatively, when one is subject to power, emphasis is placed on the moment at which, in virtue of knowledge as truth, one says yes or no to it.<sup>114</sup> Humanism’s universal subject of right is oblivious to the fundamental ontology of the will to power. At best, man is a simplified conception of understanding and, at worst, an unjustified generalisation that does not exist.<sup>115</sup> It is time to think of intersubjective relations beyond the juridical form of the contract, Foucault argues, whilst political struggle that is based on dialectical contradiction must be freed from these sterile constraints.<sup>116</sup>

#### **5.iv. The Exercise of *Pouvoir***

Foucault’s unambiguous argument is that, to understand normative games of truth, it is necessary to expand the definition of power.<sup>117</sup> This is not to discard a theory that conceives of the nature of power in respect of the state and its exercise via mechanisms of repression, but to incorporate it into a genealogical analysis of *pouvoir*.<sup>118</sup> At the same time, Foucault’s desire to overcome a theory of power

<sup>110</sup> Foucault, “Prison Talk”, p. 51.

<sup>111</sup> Foucault, “The History of Sexuality”, p. 187.

<sup>112</sup> Aron, “Macht, Power, Puissance”, p. 272.

<sup>113</sup> Foucault, “Body/Power”, pp. 59-60.

<sup>114</sup> Foucault, “Powers and Strategies”, pp. 139-140.

<sup>115</sup> Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, § 671, p. 354 and § 692, p. 369.

<sup>116</sup> Foucault, “Powers and Strategies”, pp. 143-144.

<sup>117</sup> Foucault, “The Subject and Power”, p. 209.

<sup>118</sup> Foucault, “Powers and Strategies”, p. 141. It is possible, for example, “for class struggle not to be the ‘ratio for the exercise of power’, yet still be the ‘guarantee of intelligibility’ for certain grand strategies”. Foucault, “Powers and Strategies”, p. 142.

### *A Genealogy of Normativity and Pouvoir*

necessitates that he leave behind his nietzschean notion—though obviously not genealogy itself—which shares with the humanist the idea that *pouvoir* is exercised solely by mechanisms of repression. In this respect, each professor at the *Collège de France* is obliged to present their research to the public annually in twelve, two-hour lectures, and in the academic year 1975-1976 Foucault's lectures, "*Il faut défendre la société*", are devoted to a reconsideration of *pouvoir* in tandem with his rejection of the adequacy of a theory of power for critical thought that pursues enlightenment.<sup>119</sup> So, with a nietzschean genealogy of *pouvoir* in mind, "why not continue to pursue a theory which in its discontinuity is so attractive and plausible, albeit so little verifiable"?<sup>120</sup>

Since 1968, Foucault replies, the contest between genealogical critique and the power of scientific discourse has neither exposed, nor specified, the real issue at stake: how to conceive of the *pouvoir* that surges into view contemporaneously with the collapse of fascism and stalinism, the analysis of which gets bogged down in the question of sovereignty and the state due to the cold war.<sup>121</sup> Specifically, to the extent that the twentieth century raises the problem of how to deal with an overabundance of *pouvoir*,<sup>122</sup> Foucault poses the empirical questions, how is *pouvoir* exercised?, and what is the nature *qua* relations and effects of *pouvoir*?. They allow a "critical investigation into the thematics of power ... [and] avoid accusing a metaphysics or an ontology of power of being fraudulent".<sup>123</sup> Neither humanism, which uses a contract-oppression schema to specify the legitimate from the illegitimate exercise of power, nor Foucault's pre-1975 nietzschean domination-repression schema, which understands submission as the political consequence of the relation of force,<sup>124</sup> are able to conceive of the exercise of power outwith the mechanisms of repression of a state-centred power. It is obvious, Foucault writes in a characteristic moment of self-critique,

that all my work in recent years has been couched in the schema of struggle-repression, ... which I have now been forced to reconsider, ... . [T]his notion of repression ... is wholly inadequate to the analysis of the mechanisms and effects of power that it is so pervasively used to characterise today.<sup>125</sup>

<sup>119</sup> Fontana and Bertani, "Situation du cours", p. 247.

<sup>120</sup> Foucault, "Two Lectures", p. 86.

<sup>121</sup> Foucault, "Truth and Power", pp. 115-116.

<sup>122</sup> Fontana and Bertani, "Situation du cours", p. 249.

<sup>123</sup> Foucault, "The Subject and Power", p. 217.

<sup>124</sup> Foucault, "Two Lectures", pp. 89-91.

<sup>125</sup> Foucault, "Two Lectures", p. 92.

## *A Genealogy of Normativity and Pouvoir*

Humanism's theory of power perpetuates the legacy of monarchical sovereignty, evident since the sixteenth century, in which the king monopolises state power and employs right as a means to arbitrate feudal wars.<sup>126</sup> The principal features of this juridico-discursive power, with a formal legislative power on one side that is related, via mechanisms of repression, to an obedient subject on the other, include: a negative relation that sets limits; the insistence of the rule, where through its hold on discourse power defines the subject's field of intelligible actions – thus, juridico-discursive; a cycle of prohibitions; a logic of censorship; and the uniformity of the apparatus, through which power is exercised homogeneously by mechanisms of law, prohibition and censorship.<sup>127</sup> Humanism is a continuation of top-down power along a sovereign-subject axis, albeit from the point of view of a theory of human rather than divine right. Normative justice is sandwiched between the state and the citizen-subject,<sup>128</sup> as juridical power displaces God as the site of legitimation with the immanent foundation of the governed.<sup>129</sup>

Insofar as Nietzsche is concerned, Foucault's empiricisation of his aphorisms through critiques of madness, delinquency and perversion lead him to realise that a play of domination does not prosper solely because of repression, but due to the exercise of *pouvoir* through mechanisms and techniques which produce subjects.<sup>130</sup> Foucault's post-nietzschean concept of *pouvoir* is most evident in his refinement of what it means to be a subject. In addition to the subjugation suffered under mechanisms of repression, for instance, Foucault's concept of *assujettissement* also captures subjection,<sup>131</sup> the real and material constitution of the self as an individual subject and a subject within the population,<sup>132</sup> as well as objectification, where the self is an object of *savoir*.<sup>133</sup> Rather than ask what part of himself or his power the ideal subject cedes in return for letting himself be subjected, Foucault examines "how relations of subjection are able to constitute the subject".<sup>134</sup>

For Foucault, the right that clothes might glosses over domination and it is

<sup>126</sup> Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, pp. 86-91.

<sup>127</sup> Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, pp. 83-85.

<sup>128</sup> Foucault, "Two Lectures", p. 103.

<sup>129</sup> Pasquino, "Michel Foucault (1926-84)", p. 38.

<sup>130</sup> Foucault, "Two Lectures", p. 96. Although Nietzsche speaks of mechanisms of prohibition, he does intimate the workings of a society grounded in extra-juridical *somato-* and *bio-pouvoir*. See Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, § 738, p. 391 and § 717, pp. 382-383.

<sup>131</sup> Foucault, "Cours du 14 janvier 1976", p. 24.

<sup>132</sup> Rajchman, *Michel Foucault*, p. 57.

<sup>133</sup> Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, p. 24.

<sup>134</sup> "[C]omment les relations d'assujettissement peuvent fabriquer des sujets". Foucault, "Résumé", p. 239.

### *A Genealogy of Normativity and Pouvoir*

the permanent agent of polymorphous techniques of subjection, which produce subjects and are unaccounted for in humanist political critique.<sup>135</sup> He thus struggles against *formes d'assujettissement*, where subjugation, subjection and objectification intersect and result in *la soumission de la subjectivité*, the submission of subjectivity.<sup>136</sup> That is, *formes d'assujettissement* are indicative of *pouvoir* which makes individuals subjects. Here,

[t]here are two meanings of the word subject: subject to someone else by control and dependence, and tied to his own identity by a conscience or self-knowledge. Both meanings suggest a form of power which subjugates and makes subject to (*une forme de pouvoir qui subjugué et assujettit*).<sup>137</sup><sup>138</sup>

Indeed, it is because of the explanatory inadequacy of mechanisms of repression peculiar to the humanist theory of power, and his own nietzschean genealogy of *pouvoir*, both of which fail to account for how the subject is produced in normative games of truth, that Foucault says we need a critical:

political philosophy that isn't erected around the problem of sovereignty, nor therefore around the problems of law and prohibition. We need to cut off the King's head: in political theory that has still to be done.<sup>139</sup>

After Machiavelli, who liberates the study of power from morality, Foucault liberates the study of *pouvoir* from political critique that is centred on the state and mechanisms of repression. His aim is to turn the question of *pouvoir* against the power of the state.<sup>140</sup> Foucault argues that power mechanisms can be deciphered on the basis of a strategy immanent in the relation of force.<sup>141</sup> If political critique deploys truth to fix limits to the rights of power in the name of freedom, the critical question for an analysis of *pouvoir* that assumes we are "subjected to the production of truth through power[,] and we cannot exercise power except through the production of truth", is: "what rules of right are implemented by the relations of power in the production of the discourses of truth?".<sup>142</sup> The right that is proposed by humanism constitutes the normative experience which produces subjects, and

<sup>135</sup> Foucault, "Two Lectures", pp. 95-96.

<sup>136</sup> Foucault, "Le sujet et le pouvoir", p. 228.

<sup>137</sup> Foucault, "Le sujet et le pouvoir", p. 227. My emphasis.

<sup>138</sup> Foucault, "The Subject and Power", p. 212. My emphasis.

<sup>139</sup> Foucault, "Truth and Power", p. 121.

<sup>140</sup> Ewald, "Foucault, une pensée sans aveu", p. 47.

<sup>141</sup> Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, p. 97.

<sup>142</sup> Foucault, "Two Lectures", p. 93.



## *A Genealogy of Normativity and Pouvoir*

Foucault's genealogical critique seeks to make the humanist aware of it as a problem in terms of the forms of subjection and objectification it effects.

Foucault's technico-strategic, rather than juridico-negative,<sup>143</sup> analysis of the exercise of *pouvoir* by productive mechanisms proceeds as a critique that is a constant checking.<sup>144</sup> It is a perpetual articulation of the will to know as a problem for maturity. Around, above and below juridical power, the mechanisms and techniques of the technologies of *somato-* and *bio-pouvoir* and political rationality constitute *l'ordre du discours*,<sup>145</sup> the *pouvoir/savoir* that produce subjects. Foucault calls each an economy of *pouvoir*, or all the procedures which allow the effects of a technology of *pouvoir* to circulate in a continuous, individualised manner throughout intersubjective relations.<sup>146</sup> Also, the mechanisms and techniques that circulate an economy require a corresponding political economy of truth. While the economy of *pouvoir* is a political concern, the political economy is the philosophical focus for the post-1968 critical historian<sup>147</sup> – typically, because it moves within and coalesces with *pouvoir*,<sup>148</sup> the political economy appears as a régime of truth,<sup>149</sup> or normativity.

Finally, to avoid any lapse back into a theorisation of state power and its repressive mechanisms, Foucault alludes to five methodological guidelines for an analysis of how *pouvoir* is exercised: firstly, investigate the multiple, final destinations of capillary *pouvoir*, which as it less legal in character is more able to surmount and extend itself beyond juridical right; secondly, look at *pouvoir* where it produces real effects in practice, or material subjection; thirdly, suppose that *pouvoir* is exercised through a network in which subjects are linked to each other, and upon whom *pouvoir* is articulated as subjection and government<sup>150</sup> – assume, that is, that the subject is constituted by, as well as the vehicle of, *pouvoir*;<sup>151</sup> fourth, to assuage those who state that, as vehicles of *pouvoir*, everyone thinks and acts the same,

<sup>143</sup> Foucault, "The History of Sexuality", p. 184.

<sup>144</sup> Foucault, "The Subject and Power", p. 209.

<sup>145</sup> Said, "Foucault and the Imagination of Power", p. 150.

<sup>146</sup> Foucault, "Truth and Power", p. 119.

<sup>147</sup> Foucault, "Truth and Power", pp. 131-132.

<sup>148</sup> However, Foucault states that "I do not mean to say that the games of truth are but relationships of power ... . My problem is ... to know how games of truth can put themselves in place and be linked to relationships of power". Foucault, "The ethic of the care for the self", p. 16.

<sup>149</sup> Here, "'[t]ruth' is to be understood as a system of ordered procedures for the production, regulation, distribution, circulation and operation of statements. 'Truth' is linked in a circular relation with systems of power which produce and sustain it, and to effects of power which it induces and which extend it. A 'régime' of truth". Foucault, "Truth and Power", p. 133.

<sup>150</sup> Foucault, "Cours du 14 janvier 1976", p. 26.

<sup>151</sup> Foucault, "Two Lectures", pp. 96-98.

### *A Genealogy of Normativity and Pouvoir*

undertake an ascending analysis of *pouvoir* from the capillary up to the sovereign level; and, fifth, accept that the productive mechanisms and techniques of *pouvoir* are co-extensive with ideology, but that they also function through instruments which form *savoir*, so that their exercise puts into circulation the strategic apparatuses of *pouvoir/savoir*.<sup>152</sup> According to Foucault, therefore, the condition of possibility relevant to the exercise of *pouvoir* by productive mechanisms is the relation of force, which even if it seems secondary concerns the body and daily existence. The intersubjective relation of force is the concrete, shifting soil in which the normative justice of the juridical state is grounded, and the condition that makes it possible for repressive power to be exercised.<sup>153</sup> *Pouvoir*, Foucault argues,

must be understood in the first instance as the multiplicity of force relations ... . Power's condition of possibility, or in any case the viewpoint which permits one to understand its exercise ... and which also makes it possible to use its mechanisms as a grid of intelligibility of the social order, ... is the moving substrate of force relations which, by virtue of their inequality, constantly engender states of power, ... . Power is everywhere; not because it embraces everything, but because it comes from everywhere. ... One needs to be nominalistic, no doubt: power is not an institution, and not a structure; neither is it a certain strength we are endowed with; it is the name one attributes to a complex strategical situation in a particular society.<sup>154</sup>

#### *5.v. Somato-Pouvoir*

In the two preceding sections, I have discussed the shortcomings of Foucault's proto-genealogy of madness and his genealogy of *pouvoir*, which mirror the explanatory weakness of a theory of power that concentrates on mechanisms of repression. Together with its state-centred sense of the nature of power, humanism overlooks power's productive effectiveness, which causes Foucault to ponder why this juridical notion of power is so readily accepted. Speculating, he suggests that:

power is tolerable only on condition that it mask a substantial part of itself. Its success is proportional to its ability to hide its own mechanisms. Would power be accepted if it were entirely cynical? For it, secrecy is not in the nature of an abuse; it is indispensable to its operation. ... Power as a pure limit set on

<sup>152</sup> Foucault, "Two Lectures", pp. 99-102. The second, third, first/fourth and fifth of these methodological guidelines equate to the rules of: immanence; continual variation; double-conditioning; and the tactical polyvalence of discourses. Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, pp. 98-102.

<sup>153</sup> Foucault, "The History of Sexuality", p. 187.

<sup>154</sup> Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, pp. 92-93.

## *A Genealogy of Normativity and Pouvoir*

freedom is ... the general form of its acceptability.<sup>155</sup>

*Discipline and Punish* and *The History of Sexuality* are genealogical critiques of the technologies of *somato-* and *bio-pouvoir*, which humanist political critique effectively masks to enable juridical state power to operate. *Discipline and Punish*, which also provides intelligibility for prison reform in France during the 1970s, is the blueprint for *The History of Sexuality*, which investigates what the real mechanisms of *pouvoir* are.<sup>156</sup> Like madness as reason's subjugated other, both books unmask the productive mechanisms which are the indispensable other of juridical power's repressive mechanisms. But *Discipline and Punish* and *The History of Sexuality* also refine *Madness and Civilization*. Whereas the latter portrays how normativity depends on the confined exclusion of the other, whose symptom of difference to the subject of reason is indicative of a medical condition, these 1970s texts are genealogical critiques of the normalisation effected by productive mechanisms outside the asylum within the social body.<sup>157</sup> *Discipline and Punish* inaugurates, and *The History of Sexuality* extends, Foucault's critical history of finitude in the present.<sup>158</sup> Genealogical critique traces the descent and emergence of normative experience from its origins in subjection and objectification. *Discipline and Punish*, which is the focus of this section, investigates the mechanisms of discipline and the technique of examination of *somato-pouvoir* – *sóma*, the Greek word for body<sup>159</sup> – which "actually penetrates the density of the body itself without any need for its representation by, or its mediation through, the subject's conscious intention",<sup>160</sup> and in section 5.vi. I deal with *bio-pouvoir's* mechanisms of regulation and its technique of confession.

*Discipline and Punish* is a study of punishment as spectacle and as representation in the renaissance and classical epochs, and as incarceration in the post-1790 modern epoch. Foucault argues that each form of punishment is the respective mirror of monarchical and juridical power and *somato-pouvoir*. In particular, Foucault critiques incarceration insofar as it reflects the asymmetrical

<sup>155</sup> Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, p. 86.

<sup>156</sup> Foucault, "On Power", pp. 101-102.

<sup>157</sup> Foucault, "Body/Power", p. 61.

<sup>158</sup> Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, p. 31.

<sup>159</sup> Foucault, *The Care of the Self*, p. 27.

<sup>160</sup> "[L]es rapports de pouvoir peuvent passer matériellement dans l'épaisseur même des corps sans avoir à être relayés par la représentation des sujets ... [ou] intériorisé dans la conscience ... Il y a un réseau de bio-pouvoir, de somato-pouvoir". Foucault, "Les rapports de pouvoir passent à l'intérieur des corps", p. 231.

### *A Genealogy of Normativity and Pouvoir*

and inegalitarian capillary *somato-pouvoir* in the social body of western societies.<sup>161</sup> Through writing the genealogy of the citizen's condition of existence, the docile-utility body of subjection and objectification, Foucault examines the productive mechanisms of discipline that operate in the modern penitentiary in terms of their social function, their use as a political strategy, their investment of the body by *pouvoir*, and their personification of the endogenous status of *savoir* to *somato-pouvoir*.<sup>162</sup> The citizen is the correlative of *somato-pouvoir's* mechanisms and techniques which are exerted over the body. He is the reality-reference on which "various concepts have been constructed and domains of analysis carved out: psyche, subjectivity, personality, consciousness, etc."<sup>163</sup> In effect, the enlightenment's invitation to establish maturity, which is taken up by humanism's political critique that normatively regulates state power, fails: man is already in himself the effect of mechanisms of subjection more absolute than himself.<sup>164</sup>

Foucault's genealogy commences with monarchical power. From the thirteenth century to the renaissance epoch, a majority of serious crimes are punished by the technique of torture or *supplice*, or corporal punishment of a horrible degree. Nonetheless, it is a legally codified art of punishment. It extracts the penal truth from the criminal through inflicting a certain level of pain, a gradation of pain that culminates in death, or death-torture, whereby life is maintained in pain. Through this juridical game of innocence or guilt between the prosecutor and criminal, monarchical power produces the truth before its spectacle of punishment is publicly imposed upon the criminal, which re-activates the dissymmetry of the king's power over his subjects and the imbalance of right between them.<sup>165</sup> Foucault writes that monarchical power "presented rules and obligations as personal bonds ... [with] disobedience ... an act of hostility...that

<sup>161</sup> Foucault, "Radioscope de Michel Foucault", p. 797. Foucault, "Sur les façons d'écrire l'histoire", p. 599. A note on Foucault's account of epochs is in order here. To recall, in *Madness and Civilization* he speaks of the renaissance epoch, which proceeds mediæval christianity and runs to the mid-seventeenth century, and the classical (1656-1789) and the modern epochs (post-1789). Similarly, in *The Order of Things* Foucault refers to renaissance humanism and classical rationalism, and the post-kantian modern epoch, which are defined by their epistemes. He largely maintains this chronology in *Discipline and Punish*, albeit in terms of the technologies of monarchical (renaissance epoch) and juridical power (classical epoch of 1760-1840) and *somato-pouvoir* (modern epoch after the mid-nineteenth century) The one inconsistency is the divide between the renaissance and classical epochs. In *Discipline and Punish*, it is the mid-eighteenth, rather than the seventeenth (1656), century of *Madness and Civilization*.

<sup>162</sup> Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, pp. 23-24.

<sup>163</sup> Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, p. 29.

<sup>164</sup> Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, p. 30.

<sup>165</sup> Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, pp. 33-50.

### *A Genealogy of Normativity and Pouvoir*

[necessitated] the ritual display of its reality as a 'super-power'".<sup>166</sup>

For the eighteenth century *philosophe*, the spectacle of punishment's juridico-physical game exacerbates the shame of the criminal, while the king's tyrannical excess of armed justice stokes violent rebellion in the people. Accordingly, a man-measure that defines the legitimate frontier of the power to punish is drawn up. Foucault calls it the enigmatic leniency of the classical epoch, where punishment must have humanity as its measure. Reform, however, is merely the politics of an already existent change, from a monarchical to a juridical economy of power, and from punishment as spectacle to representation.

Classical punishment as representation is a function of early capitalist society, in which juridical power elaborates the right to punish away from the vengeance of the sovereign to the defence of the democratic social body.<sup>167</sup> The conditions required for juridical power include the objectification that produces the criminal's soul, who supersedes the tortured body as the object of punishment from within, rather than as a moral superimposition upon, state power. In the classical epoch, the power that underlies the exercise of punishment is duplicated by an object relation, "in which are caught up not only the crime as a fact to be established according to common norms, but the criminal as an individual to be known according to specific criteria".<sup>168</sup> Punishment as representation to the social body invests each crime with a specific law and each criminal with a particular punishment.<sup>169</sup> Juridical power deploys the soul that *connaissance* constitutes to reconvert the criminal into a subject of right, who can then re-occupy his place as a citizen in the social body. By the late eighteenth century, Foucault says there is evidence in France of punishment as spectacle, representation and incarceration.<sup>170</sup>

We have, then, the sovereign and his force, the social body and the administrative apparatus; ... the vanquished enemy, the juridical subject in the process of requalification, the individual subjected to immediate coercion; the tortured body, the soul with its manipulated representations, the body subjected to training. We have here the ... elements that characterize the three mechanisms ... according to which the power to punish is exercised ... [H]ow is it that, in the end, it was the third that was adopted?<sup>171</sup>

<sup>166</sup> Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, p. 57.

<sup>167</sup> Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, pp. 73-89.

<sup>168</sup> Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, pp. 101-102.

<sup>169</sup> Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, pp. 104-114.

<sup>170</sup> Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, pp. 120-126.

<sup>171</sup> Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, pp. 130-131.

### *A Genealogy of Normativity and Pouvoir*

The adoption of punishment as incarceration after 1810 is the result of juridical power, which develops the prison, and *somato-pouvoir* that provides its mechanisms.<sup>172</sup> In the social body where these technologies are co-extensive, Foucault claims that the classical epoch's man-the-machine, who is an intelligible and functional, anatomico-metaphysical body, is combined with an administrative techno-politics of the useful and submissible body. They produce the politico-economic docile-utility body, which is transformed and improved, as well as subjected and used. The cause is the seventeenth and eighteenth century disciplines, which effect domination in capillary *pouvoir* through an art of the body. It enters a machinery of *pouvoir* that explores, re-arranges and breaks the body down. Foucault calls this the political anatomy of *somato-pouvoir*, which gives birth to humanism's modern man,<sup>173</sup> and only a genealogy that is grey and meticulous can resurrect out of the institutions of the school, hospital, barracks and factory, where the smallest details of discipline are manifest, the essential mechanisms and technique of *somato-pouvoir*.<sup>174</sup>

Genealogical critique uncovers four strategies for the subjection of the body – *tableaux vivants*, *manoeuvre*, *exercice* and *dressage* – which are exercised by *somato-pouvoir*'s productive mechanisms within its four essential disciplines: the art of distribution creates cellular *pouvoir*, which distributes the body;<sup>175</sup> the control of activity is an organic *pouvoir* that extracts productivity from the body;<sup>176</sup> the organisation of geneses is a limitless *pouvoir*, which accumulates time from the body;<sup>177</sup> and the composition of forces is an economically productive *pouvoir* that

<sup>172</sup> Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, p. 117 and p. 128.

<sup>173</sup> Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, p. 28.

<sup>174</sup> Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, pp. 135-141.

<sup>175</sup> The art of distribution disciplines through the large scale *enclosure* of individuals and the *partitioning* of individuals in an analytical space. It also disciplines via *functional sites*, which code architectural space in order to articulate an administrative and political space, and through *rank*, which holds individuals in disciplinary space. An enclosed architectural, functional and hierarchical space is constituted as disciplinary by the *tableaux vivants*, which as a technique of *pouvoir* and a procedure of *savoir* distribute and analyse, as well as supervise and make intelligible, the subject *qua* individual and member of an ordered multiplicity. Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, pp. 141-149.

<sup>176</sup> The control of activity operates through a technique of *time-tabling*, which applies the body to its exercise, and the *temporal elaboration of the act* that penetrates the body's behaviour with the imperatives of time. Further, the control of activity functions via the *correlation of the body and the gesture*, which ensures efficient actions, the *body-object articulation* that enmeshes the body with the objects it manipulates, and the *exhaustive use* of the body *vis-à-vis* the finitude of time. These techniques of subjection of the *manoeuvre* see the mechanical body of speculative physics superseded by the natural body of exercise and duration, which is offered up to new forms of *savoir*. Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, pp. 149-156.

<sup>177</sup> The organisation of geneses add up and capitalise the time of the individual through a linear, evolutive time, in which each individual evolves in terms of a genesis, whilst administrative and economic techniques reveal a cumulative time that intimates the progress of society. The techniques of

### *A Genealogy of Normativity and Pouvoir*

organises the body into an efficient machine.<sup>178</sup> As the other of the *philosophe's* dream of a perfect society that is constituted by juridical subjects, the disciplines are installed in virtue of a military dream of society, where each body is a meticulously subjected cog in the social machine.<sup>179</sup> For the military dream to be realised through the disciplines, the exercise of *somato-pouvoir* requires the three techniques of hierarchical observation, normalising judgement and examination. In fact, it is in the examination that hierarchical observation is combined with normalising judgement to produce the normalising gaze.<sup>180</sup> It gives rise to the exam *qua* economy of visibility, which holds the body in a mechanism of objectification; the exam *qua* field of documentation, which inscribes the body in a field of *connaissance* as an analysable object; and the exam *qua* production of each body as a case via *pouvoir/savoir*. As Foucault claims,

[t]he examination ... is a normalizing gaze, a surveillance that makes it possible to qualify, to classify and to punish. ... In it are combined the ceremony of power, and the form of the experiment, the deployment of force and the establishment of truth. At the heart of the procedure of discipline, it manifests the subjection of those who are perceived as objects and the objectification of those who are subjected. The superimposition of the power relations and knowledge relations assumes in the examination all its visible brilliance.<sup>181</sup>

The anonymous functionality of *somato-pouvoir* marks the reversal from historico-ritual to scientifico-disciplinary mechanisms of subjection and objectification. It shifts the political axis from the monarch to the individual, who through humanism's juridico-anthropology is "a reality fabricated by the specific technology of power that I have called 'discipline'".<sup>182</sup> *Somato-pouvoir* substantiates Foucault's claim of the futility, for critical thought that is concerned with maturity,

subjection of *exercice* effect a dynamics of continuous social evolution that imposes repetitive and different, but always graduated, tasks on the body. Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, pp. 156-162.

<sup>178</sup> The composition of forces refers to the constitution of the body as part of a multi-segmentary machine, which functions according to a composite of time. It optimises each body in relation to another via a precise system of command that is practised through techniques of *dressage*. Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, pp. 162-166.

<sup>179</sup> Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, p. 169.

<sup>180</sup> Hierarchical observation induces an effect of *pouvoir* on the body through the principle of *encastrement*, an embedding *pouvoir* or physics of the body, which uses a mechanism of architecturalised surveillance to effect the progressive, continuous and functional objectification of behaviour. In tandem with hierarchical observation is normalising judgement. It is a mechanism of extra-juridical micro-penalties which, upon the individual's non-observance of an institution's norm and/or his inability to conform through training to an institution's purpose, operate through *corrective* exercises that compare, differentiate, hierarchise, homogenise and exclude the subject. Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, pp. 170-192.

<sup>181</sup> Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, pp. 184-185.

<sup>182</sup> Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, p. 183 and pp. 192-193.

### *A Genealogy of Normativity and Pouvoir*

of a theory of negative, repressive power. He shows that *pouvoir* produces “domains of objects and rituals of truth. The individual and the knowledge that may be gained of him belong to this production”.<sup>183</sup> Moreover, if *somato-pouvoir*’s productive mechanisms and technique are the nuts and bolts of the confined exclusion of the madman that is first articulated in *Madness and Civilization*, then Foucault’s proto- and genealogical critique of the classical epoch reveal that it envisages two models to control the subject: exile-enclosure via confinement, separation and the marked body; and tactical partition through correct training, segmentation and the analysed body. Both in turn fuel the modern epoch’s political dreams of a pure community and a disciplined society, which are based on a state of nature and a state of plague, respectively. In the nineteenth century, these dreams become real when the models of exclusion and discipline, which confine and correct, combine.<sup>184</sup>

According to Foucault, Bentham’s proposal for a panopticon is the architectural personification of these conjoined models. The panopticon turns the confined inmate into a separated individual, who isolated in his cell from others and guards ceases to be a subject of communication simultaneous to his supervision as an object of information. A central tower, and the guard hidden from view within it, ensure a visible but unverifiable *pouvoir*. Insofar as the inmate is seen, without seeing, whilst the guard sees, without being seen, the panopticon’s mechanisms automatise and disindividualise *pouvoir*. Real subjection materialises from a fictitious, because forceless, relation. Houses of security, which confine the excluded in the classical epoch, become the modern houses of certainty. Subjected to a field of visibility, the inmate inscribes in himself the duality of *pouvoir*—he assumes responsibility for, and plays spontaneously upon himself, the constraints of *pouvoir*—and in so doing he becomes the principle of his own subjection.<sup>185</sup> In addition, the panopticon’s mechanisms of surveillance render it into a laboratory, where experiments are carried out on inmates, such that “knowledge follows the advances of power, discovering new objects of knowledge over all the surfaces on which power is exercised”.<sup>186</sup> The panopticon, Foucault writes, is not a dream, but the general principle of a society that is penetrated through and through with disciplinary mechanisms.<sup>187</sup>

<sup>183</sup> Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, p. 194.

<sup>184</sup> Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, pp. 197-199.

<sup>185</sup> Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, pp. 200-203.

<sup>186</sup> Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, p. 204.

<sup>187</sup> Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, pp. 205-209.



## *A Genealogy of Normativity and Pouvoir*

The bridge between the discipline-blockade of the plague stricken town, and the discipline-mechanism of the panopticon 150 years later, is the normative experience of *somato-pouvoir*. To be sure, discipline is irrevocably altered: firstly, by the floating population and increased productivity of industrialisation, which encourages an intensification of mechanisms of discipline;<sup>188</sup> secondly, although *somato-pouvoir* is neither dependent on, a direct extension of, or independent from, the normative justice proposed by political critique to juridical power, it is its non-egalitarian and asymmetrical dark underside which operates in capillary *pouvoir*. Actual, corporal disciplines, Foucault says, constitute the foundation of formal, juridical liberties.<sup>189</sup> Essentially, the shift from the classical to the modern epoch occurs as the disciplines in the school, hospital, barracks and factory break anchor from their institutional origin and dock with the police, whose function is to oversee *somato-pouvoir* in the social body.<sup>190</sup>

In the first half of the nineteenth century, therefore, the shift from punishment as representation to punishment as incarceration signals a transition from juridical power to *somato-pouvoir*. And, by the same token that juridical power upholds the principle of maturity and *somato-pouvoir* concomitantly effects subjection and objectification, normative justice that is equal, and a legal machinery which is autonomous, incorporate the mechanisms and techniques of discipline.<sup>191</sup> In its effects, juridical right mirrors penal justice. The penitentiary of despotic omni-discipline,<sup>192</sup> which deprives the criminal of his liberty through individual isolation and hierarchy, compulsory work, cure and normalization,<sup>193</sup> is a depiction of the citizen's intersubjective relations. In particular, justice is replaced by the extra-judicial *connaissance* of the technicians, who regulate the penitentiary.<sup>194</sup> They transform the criminal into the delinquent, who is a danger not because of the crime he commits, but in virtue of the life he led, leads and will lead.<sup>195</sup> At the same

<sup>188</sup> Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, pp. 218-221.

<sup>189</sup> Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, pp. 222-223.

<sup>190</sup> Institutional disciplines perform a *functional inversion* of late seventeenth century discipline. Instead of the neutralisation of danger, the eighteenth century disciplines start to increase the utility of subjects. Further, the *swarming of disciplinary mechanisms* sees the de-institutionalisation of the disciplines, which begin to effect extra-institutional subjects as well. Thirdly, the *state-control of disciplinary mechanisms* by a police structure, which in addition to its role as the auxiliary of justice, infiltrates the capillary *pouvoir* that juridical power does not reach, means that the disciplines effect *somato-pouvoir* beyond their institutional origins. Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, pp. 209-216.

<sup>191</sup> Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, pp. 231-235.

<sup>192</sup> Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, pp. 236-244.

<sup>193</sup> Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, p. 248.

<sup>194</sup> Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, pp. 244-256.

<sup>195</sup> Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, pp. 17-19.

### *A Genealogy of Normativity and Pouvoir*

time, fabrication of the delinquent re-enforces the judgements of juridical power, which is willingly dependent on this extra-juridical *connaissance*.<sup>196</sup> Further, the delinquent serves a political function. He is the agent of juridical power's bourgeois illegalities in the social, economic and political arenas,<sup>197</sup> which not only appear to reflect justice in virtue of their correspondence to the truth of a certain type of man, the delinquent, but they mask the domination of juridical power's egalitarian code. It turns on *somato-pouvoir* that fixes the subject in time, space and an order, or a social origin, a political identity and an economic hierarchy.<sup>198</sup>

Punishment as incarceration reflects Foucault's analysis of the *pouvoir/savoir* that effects the submission of subjectivity. Prison-penitentiary technicians work in a carceral archipelago, which functions along a continuum of confinement, juridical punishment and mechanisms of discipline.<sup>199</sup> Juridical power that incarcerates seems natural if its object is the abnormal delinquent, who chooses not to follow the rule, whilst *somato-pouvoir* is legal in virtue of its correction of the delinquent back to normality. The penitentiary is the "real, material counterpart of that chimerical granting of the right to punish" established by the social contract,<sup>200</sup> and it represents a new economy of *pouvoir* that is based on juridico-disciplinary right: law *qua* legality and nature, prescription and constitution; and law *qua* norm in a society ruled by the normative power "of the teacher-judge, the doctor-judge, the educator-judge".<sup>201</sup> Although the apparatus of the penitentiary can be transformed, the problem is how to halt the spread of *somato-pouvoir* and its mechanisms of normalisation in a society wherein the body suffers subjection and its actions objectification. "I am not saying", Foucault re-iterates,

that the human sciences emerged from the prison. But, if they have been able to ... produce so many profound changes in the episteme, it is because they have been conveyed by a ... new modality of power: a certain policy of the body, a certain way of rendering the group of men docile and useful. This policy required the involvement of definite relations of knowledge in relations of power; it called for a technique of overlapping subjection and objectification; it brought with it new procedures of individualization. ... Knowable man (soul, individuality, consciousness, conduct, whatever it is called) is the object-effect

<sup>196</sup> Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, p. 22.

<sup>197</sup> Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, pp. 257-282.

<sup>198</sup> Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, pp. 290-291.

<sup>199</sup> Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, pp. 294-297.

<sup>200</sup> Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, p. 303.

<sup>201</sup> Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, p. 304.

## *A Genealogy of Normativity and Pouvoir*

of this analytical investment, of this domination-observation.<sup>202</sup>

### **5.vi. Bio-Pouvoir**

Foucault concludes *Discipline and Punish* with the reflection that it “must serve as a historical background to various studies of the power of normalization and the formation of knowledge in modern society”.<sup>203</sup> *The History of Sexuality* continues this critique of the entwinement of normative experience and *pouvoir*, although instead of the delinquent knowable man is now the pervert, who is the object-effect of the apparatus of sexuality. He reflects to the citizen in the social body the nineteenth century technology of *bio-pouvoir* that is exercised over the population, and my task in this section is to further explicate Foucault’s claim that *pouvoir* produces subjects through mechanisms of discipline and regulation and techniques based on seeing/examining and speaking/listening, which humanism overlooks such that its political critique fosters an exclusive maturity.

The cross-over from normativity to subjectivity, which to re-iterate will be my point of departure in chapter 6, is evident from the outset of Foucault’s genealogy of sexuality, in which he asks “why, beyond the reproduction of the species and the family, or the procurement of pleasure and joy, has western sexuality been seen as the privileged place where the profound truth of the human subject is found and articulated from”?<sup>204</sup> Once again, Foucault’s genealogical critique renders a different story to humanism’s realist history. As in the forms of punishment, where the *philosophe* explains the shift from spectacle to representation to incarceration in terms of juridical reforms, humanism’s critical discourse of sexuality, psychoanalysis, discerns tolerance for the illicit at the beginning of the seventeenth century. Over the next two hundred years, the psychoanalyst notes the bourgeoisie’s clampdown on sexuality.<sup>205</sup> Under a victorian regime that serves capitalism, the psychoanalyst suggests, sexuality is confined to the procreative function that defines the conjugal relation in the suburban home. Any other

<sup>202</sup> Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, p. 305.

<sup>203</sup> Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, p. 308.

<sup>204</sup> “[C]omment se fait-il que, dans une société comme la nôtre, la sexualité ne soit pas simplement ce qui permet de reproduire l’espèce, la famille, les individus? Pas simplement quelque chose qui procure du plaisir et de la jouissance? Comment se fait-il qu’elle ait été considérée comme le lieu privilégié où se lit, où se dit notre vérité profonde?”. Foucault, “Non au sexe roi”, pp. 256-257.

<sup>205</sup> Insofar as juridical power exercises mechanisms of repression over sex, Foucault remarks that in France they are absent as late as 1810, when the napoleonic code is first introduced. Foucault, “Sexual Morality and the Law”, pp. 271-275.

### *A Genealogy of Normativity and Pouvoir*

function, purpose or place of sexuality is condemned to prohibition, non-existence and silence. A mechanism of repression is the fundamental link between juridical power and sex until the start of the twentieth century and the sexual revolution driven by Charcot, Freud and psychoanalysis.<sup>206</sup>

Foucault is skeptical about psychoanalysis' history of juridical power's hold on sex. His skepticism is fuelled by the discursive existence of sex in a régime of power-knowledge-pleasure. Under this apparatus of a science of sex, the *scientia sexualis*, the truth about sex in the modern epoch is formulated on the basis of the subject of desire. But rather than relieve sex from juridical power through the liberation of desire, Foucault claims that psychoanalysis is merely the apotheosis of the *scientia sexualis*, not least because this apparatus' régime of truth constitutes the subject's desire in the first place.<sup>207</sup> For these reasons, Foucault argues that the mechanism of repression is an hypothesis to be challenged historically (is the victorian age of repression a fact?), historico-theoretically (do mechanisms of power primarily repress?) and historico-politically (does psychoanalysis' political critique halt a repressive mechanism of power, or is it part of the same network—the technique of confession—which it denounces?). In brief, Foucault queries whether “there really [is] a historical rupture between the age of repression and the critical analysis of repression”?<sup>208</sup>

Firstly, Foucault suggests that man is historically incited to tell everything about his sex—indeed, at the end of the classical epoch in 1789, there is discursive explosion<sup>209</sup>—which not only brings multiple effects of displacement, intensification and modification of desire, but creates an apparatus that produces an analytical discourse about sex.<sup>210</sup> Much to the embarrassment of reason, sex is brought into discourse by rationality. An economically useful and politically conservative discourse of genitally centred sexuality constitutes polymorphous discourses on sex and actual subjects,<sup>211</sup> which aids the police's ordered maximisation of collective and individual forces within the population.<sup>212</sup>

<sup>206</sup> Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, pp. 3-8.

<sup>207</sup> Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, pp. 11-13.

<sup>208</sup> Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, p. 10.

<sup>209</sup> Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, pp. 17-18.

<sup>210</sup> Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, p. 23.

<sup>211</sup> Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, pp. 36-37.

<sup>212</sup> Population emerges as a politico-economic problem in respect of wealth, labour capacity, welfare and growth, which require the administration of birth and death rates, life expectancy, fertility, health, diet and standards of living. Sex, Foucault records, intersects this politico-economic problem. The sexual conduct of the population, from the age of marriage and legitimate and illegitimate births, to the precocity and frequency of sexual relations and contraceptive methods, constitute objects of

## *A Genealogy of Normativity and Pouvoir*

Secondly, in respect of the historico-theoretical question, nineteenth century productive mechanisms of *pouvoir* focus on the desires and abnormalities of the unnatural, who transgress or fall outside the norm of heterosexual monogamy – children, and the sensuality of those who dislike the opposite sex, for example. The *scientia sexualis* operates through the juridical *qua* natural law of marriage, and it orders desires as immanent rules of sex. In the process, the subject of desire and the pervert are subjected to mechanisms of regulation and objectified by the technique of confession.<sup>213</sup> Foucault contends that juridical power does not marginalise sexuality, but as a nascent *bio-pouvoir* it invests sexuality in the body as a way to classify individuals. We must, Foucault writes, “abandon the hypothesis that modern industrial societies ushered in an age of increased sexual repression”.<sup>214</sup>

Foucault’s third, historico-political point is that, insofar as they recount a dubious history of the repression, non-existence and silence of sex, the human sciences and their classification of the subject’s desire are a symptom of, rather than a solution to, the *scientia sexualis*.<sup>215</sup> If, during the nineteenth century, sex is incorporated into two distinct orders of *connaissance* – a physiology of reproduction based on scientific truth, and medical theories with their own rules of formation on the basis of the subject of desire – then the claims of the human sciences in respect of hygiene and public health, or the social and racial purity of the population, never mind their rudimentary rationality, suggest a systematic blindness and, in contrast to the will to know that sustains the physical sciences, a stubborn will to non-knowledge.<sup>216</sup> Freud, Foucault argues, does not inaugurate a new rationality. Instead, the construction by the human sciences of an apparatus of sex for the production of truth situates them within the millennial yoke of the technique of confession.<sup>217</sup> Its standard philosophical assumptions – “[c]onfession frees, but power reduces one to silence; truth does not belong to the order of power, but shares an original affinity with freedom” – mean that only “a ‘political history of truth’” can overturn these humanist assumptions “by showing that truth is not by

analysis and targets of intervention. Similarly, a pedagogical discourse develops on the sexuality of children; medical, biological and psychiatric discourses on sexual perversions; and ethical, criminal and political discourses on sexual deviants. Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, pp. 25-31.

<sup>213</sup> Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, pp. 38-46.

<sup>214</sup> Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, pp. 47-49.

<sup>215</sup> Foucault, “The Confession of the Flesh”, p. 219.

<sup>216</sup> Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, pp. 53-55.

<sup>217</sup> Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, p. 61. Freud’s discovery of the sexual aetiology of neuroses, Foucault says, is but one moment in the machinery of confession. For Foucault, who reads Freud through Lacan, Freud’s strength is his foundation of the field of discursivity of the logic of the unconscious. Foucault, “The Confession of the Flesh”, pp. 211-213.

### *A Genealogy of Normativity and Pouvoir*

nature free – nor error servile – but that its production is thoroughly imbued with relations of power”.<sup>218</sup>

Apart from the *ars erotica* of the eastern and ancient worlds, where truth is derived from pleasure, understood as a practice, accumulated as an experience and internal to the practice it enhances,<sup>219</sup> Foucault speaks of the European procedure that produces the truth from sex. Evident since early christianity,<sup>220</sup> it is the technique of confession, or “all those procedures by which the subject is incited to produce a discourse of truth about his sexuality which is capable of having effects on the subject himself”.<sup>221</sup> However, the technique of confession evident in the classical epoch, out of which the *scientia sexualis* originates, differs from its manifestation in mediæval christianity, where under the morality of concupiscence the universal obligation is to confess sins of the flesh in return for penance.<sup>222</sup> Initially, confession in the classical epoch governs the individual’s conscience, too, but the actual scope of the confession expands to include the insinuations, thoughts and desires of the flesh. Subsequently, the self-examination of the desire for sex and its confession on the couch replace mediæval christianity’s and the classical epoch’s confession from the pew of an already completed sin *qua* act of the flesh.<sup>223</sup> After early christianity’s establishment of confession between the monk and his abbot, in the modern epoch this technique authenticates the individual through a discourse of sexuality that extracts the truth from the subject’s desire.<sup>224</sup>

Techniques for speaking and listening about concupiscence and its object of the flesh are, under a plurisecular injunction to talk about sex,<sup>225</sup> colonised during the late eighteenth century by medical techniques, which implore the subject to tell or write the story of his desire.<sup>226</sup> The modern epoch’s technique of confession effects “men’s subjection: their constitution as subjects in both senses of the

<sup>218</sup> Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, p. 60.

<sup>219</sup> Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, pp. 57-58. Foucault subsequently revises his claim about the prevalence of the Chinese *ars erotica* in European antiquity: “I should have opposed our science of sex to a contrasting practice in our own culture. The Greeks and Romans did not have any *ars erotica* ... . They had a *technè tou biou*”. Foucault, “On the Genealogy of Ethics”, pp. 347-348.

<sup>220</sup> Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, p. 59. The epoch of early christianity follows Foucault’s periodisation of “*la spiritualité chrétienne et les principes monastiques tels qu’ils se développèrent aux IV<sup>e</sup> et V<sup>e</sup> siècles, sous le Bas-Empire*”. Foucault, “Les techniques de soi”, p. 786.

<sup>221</sup> Foucault, “The Confession of the Flesh”, pp. 215-216.

<sup>222</sup> Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, p. 33.

<sup>223</sup> Foucault, “The Confession of the Flesh”, pp. 210-211.

<sup>224</sup> Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, p. 58.

<sup>225</sup> Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, p. 22.

<sup>226</sup> Foucault, “The Confession of the Flesh”, p. 215.

### *A Genealogy of Normativity and Pouvoir*

word".<sup>227</sup> That is, the objectification of the subject with regard to medico-scientific truth, and the subjection of the subject by the authority of his interlocutor.<sup>228</sup> Judgement and the moral of abstinence give way to administration and the politico-economic aim of the total regulation of the population.<sup>229</sup> Essentially, the will to know about sex situates the techniques of confession at the centre of normativity.

And so, in this 'question' of sex ... we demand that sex speak the truth (but, since it is the secret and oblivious to its own nature, we reserve for ourselves the function of telling the truth of its truth, ... ), and we demand that it tell us our truth, or rather, the deeply buried truth of that truth about ourselves which we think we possess in our immediate consciousness. ... From this interplay there has evolved ... the project of a science of the subject.<sup>230</sup>

Foucault's genealogical critique of sexuality's normativity negates the psychoanalyst's hypothesis of the repression of sex, which deflects attention from the exercise and nature of *pouvoir* to the nature of ahistorical desire.<sup>231</sup> As a result, Foucault constitutes the political economy of normativity relevant to a will to know that is preoccupied with sexuality,<sup>232</sup> which is a means to show how this will that is central to political critique establishes domination by *pouvoir/savoir*. For instance, the *scientia sexualis* hysterises women's bodies, psychiatrises perverse pleasure and socialises procreation. Real subjects—the hysterical woman, the perverse adult and the malthusian couple—are constituted out of the fact of sex by the technique of confession, which objectifies, whilst mechanisms of regulation subject.<sup>233</sup> From the eighteenth century, the sexualisation of these subjects is an integral part of *bio-pouvoir's* deployment of sexuality, which is superimposed upon the classical epoch's deployment of alliance. The latter conserves the social body via the discourse of flesh and the moral of concupiscence, which reproduce sexual relations and maintain the juridico-moral code that governs them. A deployment of sexuality, in comparison, finds its *raison d'être* in extra-judicial *bio-pouvoir*, which creates and penetrates bodies and controls populations. If the codes around the flesh are juridical in character, the rules of sexuality are those of the law of desire.<sup>234</sup>

<sup>227</sup> Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, p. 60.

<sup>228</sup> Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, p. 61.

<sup>229</sup> Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, pp. 61-67.

<sup>230</sup> Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, pp. 69-70.

<sup>231</sup> Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, pp. 120-125.

<sup>232</sup> Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, p. 73 and p. 79.

<sup>233</sup> Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, pp. 103-105.

<sup>234</sup> Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, pp. 106-114.

### *A Genealogy of Normativity and Pouvoir*

The bourgeoisie deploy sexuality to politically order life through an affirmation of self *vis-à-vis* sexuality.<sup>235</sup> Foucault's genealogical critique, which exposes the myth of victorian mechanisms of repression, is an "archæology of psychoanalysis" that reveals its contiguity with sexuality as *bio-pouvoir*.<sup>236</sup>

In reply to monarchical sovereignty, where via mechanisms of deduction that seize things, bodies and time, the king monopolises the right of the two-edged sword to *take* life or to *let* one live, the *philosophe's* political critique transfers sovereignty from the king to the people, who constitute juridical power to protect their life.<sup>237</sup> The king's power of life and death is gradually replaced by both the social body's right to *foster* life—and, where this function is thwarted by the madman, delinquent or pervert, to *disallow* life to the point of death—and the question of the biological existence of the population. A technology of life (*bios*) takes hold of the individual's *mortalité*,<sup>238</sup> with the only limit to the task of the total administration of life *la mort*, the moment at which life escapes *pouvoir*.<sup>239</sup> Foucault re-iterates his earlier argument in *Discipline and Punish* about *somato-pouvoir*, which individualises the subject's body through mechanisms of discipline and the technique of examination. *A propos* of the will to know that extracts truth from sex, he says that *bio-pouvoir* is a technology which, because it is exercised by mechanisms of regulation and the technique of confession, totalises the population. Together, Foucault claims, *somato-pouvoir* and *bio-pouvoir* account for a significant transformation in political right—but not, to be sure, as a *coup*<sup>240</sup>—during the classical and modern epochs.

Foucault's genealogical critique uncovers technologies of individualising and totalising *pouvoir*, which introduce a political economy of normativity over and above juridical power's right.<sup>241</sup> An anatomo-politics of the body-as-machine, and a bio-politics of the population as a species-body, are exercised by mechanisms of discipline and regulation. *Somato-pouvoir* and *bio-pouvoir* are mutually inclusive and reciprocal, though historically distinct.<sup>242</sup> The focus of the former is the organic body in an institutional space, which effects organo-discipline, whilst the object of

<sup>235</sup> Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, p. 123.

<sup>236</sup> Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, p. 130.

<sup>237</sup> Foucault, "Cours du 17 mars 1976", pp. 214-215.

<sup>238</sup> Foucault, "Cours du 17 mars 1976", p. 221.

<sup>239</sup> Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, pp. 135-138.

<sup>240</sup> Foucault, "Cours du 17 mars 1976", p. 214.

<sup>241</sup> Foucault, "Cours du 17 mars 1976", p. 216.

<sup>242</sup> Specifically, discipline takes hold from the end of the seventeenth century, and regulation from the middle of the eighteenth century. Foucault, "Cours du 17 mars 1976", p. 215.



### *A Genealogy of Normativity and Pouvoir*

the latter is a biological population within the context of the state and bio-regulation.<sup>243</sup> Combined, they constitute a bi-polar technology of *pouvoir*, “anatomic and biological, individualizing and specifying, directed toward the performance of the body, with attention to the processes of life”,<sup>244</sup> all of which is symptomatic of the entry of man and life into history since the eighteenth century. The premise of *somato-pouvoir* and *bio-pouvoir* is bio-history, the representation in politics of the biological existence of juridical subjects, which entails the subjection of the body to administration and its objectification by calculated management. If, as Aristotle says, man “is a living animal with the additional capacity for a political existence”, Foucault elucidates that “modern man is an animal whose politics places his existence as a living being in question”.<sup>245</sup>

And so, where juridical power defers for authority to the sovereignty of the law and its ultimate sanction of death, the bi-polar technology of *pouvoir* refers to the norm to submit subjectivity. As juridical power is incorporated into institutions which operate an individualising *somato-pouvoir* and a totalising *bio-pouvoir*, the law itself starts to function according to the authority of the norm,<sup>246</sup> which oscillates between the body and the population. The norm circulates the bi-polar *pouvoir*'s mechanisms and applies its techniques. In the nineteenth century, Foucault writes, the society of normalisation that matures is “criss-crossed by an articulation of both the norm of discipline and the norm of regulation. ... [T]he technologies of *pouvoir* which discipline and regulate manage to spread out over the whole of society, from the organic to the biological, the body to the population”.<sup>247</sup> In respect of *somato-pouvoir*, the practice of sex *vis-à-vis* norms establishes a micro-power of the body and allows “infinitesimal surveillances, permanent controls, extremely meticulous orderings of space, indeterminate medical or psychological examinations”.<sup>248</sup> And, where *bio-pouvoir* is concerned, sex experienced through norms leads:

<sup>243</sup> Foucault, “Cours du 17 mars 1976”, p. 223.

<sup>244</sup> Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, p. 139.

<sup>245</sup> Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, p. 143.

<sup>246</sup> Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, p. 144. This explains why political struggles are driven by the moral imperatives of a norm and revolve around the same object that the bi-polar technology controls, namely, the body and the population, but are formulated in the language of the law: whence the right to life, health, happiness and the satisfaction of needs; or the right to one's body or to rediscover who one is and can be. Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, p. 145.

<sup>247</sup> “La société de normalisation, c'est une société où se croisent, selon une articulation orthogonale, la norme de la discipline et la norme de la régulation. Dire que le pouvoir ... est arrivé à couvrir toute la surface qui s'étend de l'organique au biologique, du corps à la population, par le double jeu des technologies de discipline d'une part, et des technologies de régulation de l'autre”. Foucault, “Cours du 17 mars 1976”, p. 225.

<sup>248</sup> Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, pp. 145-146.

## *A Genealogy of Normativity and Pouvoir*

to comprehensive measures, statistical assessments, and interventions aimed at the entire social body or at groups taken as a whole. Sex was a means of access both to the life of the body and the life of the species. ... Spread out from one pole to the other of this technology of sex was a whole series of different tactics that combined in varying proportions the objective of disciplining the body and that of regulating populations.<sup>249</sup>

### vii. Synopsis

In summary, what I have shown in this chapter is the untenability of humanism's political critique, which relies on procedural or substantive normative justice to regulate the power of the juridical state in the interests of the autonomous subject's political liberty and the political liberation that is central to his self-actualisation. After Foucault's proto-genalogy of madness first reveals the confined exclusion for those who differ from this normativity that is based on the subject of reason, his genealogical critique shows how those who do critical thought on the assumption of an *a priori* conception of man overlook, via their analysis of the right within a moral doctrine or the good articulated by a moral ontology, the relation of force in the play of domination of the theatre of *pouvoir*. In so doing, political critique focus exclusively on the juridical mechanisms of repression, which are constituted by the subject of right, who seldom if ever experiences them. Yet, as Foucault's genealogical critique of *somato-* and *bio-pouvoir* reveals, the citizen's parallel conditions of possibility are the mechanisms of discipline and regulation, which are effected by techniques of examination and confession. Indeed, the autonomy and recognition that humanist normativity promises along its path to enlightenment is in actual fact preceded by man's objectification and subjection to apparatuses of *pouvoir/savoir*, such as bodily discipline, sexuality or health.<sup>250</sup> In the end, the failure of political critique to procure maturity is a consequence of its dependence on a philosophical subject, who grounds humanism's theory of power, in which it is presumed that power is exercised by repressive mechanisms and that its nature is state-centred.

Foucault's genealogical critique makes the humanist cognisant of the problematic effects of the normative experience which, because of a will to know, political critique advocates for the subject of right. At the same time, a genealogy of *pouvoir* develops an alternative hypothesis of productive mechanisms of *pouvoir*. It then remains to be shown how, *vis-à-vis* genealogy's second hypothesis about the

<sup>249</sup> Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, p. 146.

<sup>250</sup> Foucault, "The Politics of Health in the Eighteenth Century", pp. 166-177.

### *A Genealogy of Normativity and Pouvoir*

nature of *pouvoir*, Foucault reveals along his nietzschean path to enlightenment that *pouvoir* is a relation of government which, as it characterises intersubjective relations, is the meeting point of normativity and subjectivity. It is Foucault's critical historical critique of this experience, from the point of view of subjectivity within, and that which is marginalised by, humanism, which I examine in the penultimate chapter that follows.

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## *A Critical History of Subjectivity and Ethico-Morality*

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In chapters 4 and 5, I illustrated that Foucault's archæological and genealogical critiques make the will to know, which informs the epistemologico-political critique that proffers objective and normative experience, conscious of itself as a problem. Humanism's pronouncements on maturity are for those who conform to sameness and are objectified and subjectified by *somato-* and *bio-pouvoir*, whilst those who do not suffer confined exclusion in the asylum and prison-penitentiary. In opposition, archæology discerns the conditions of possibility for how to think freely in the human sciences from *savoir*. Although it is ultimately unsuccessful, Foucault continues archæology's anti-humanism, pro-enlightenment trajectory through a genealogical critique of cause and effect in *connaissance* in terms of might rather than right. It necessitates a concomitant re-articulation of the exercise of *pouvoir* by productive mechanisms, and in this chapter I follow genealogy to its conclusion in Foucault's account of the nature of *pouvoir* and the immaturity of humanist subjectivity in the face of it. Further, I describe how genealogy's terminus is also a new beginning, as it leads Foucault into the last of his three critiques, a critical history of ethico-morality, which is the basis for his outline of an enlightened state of being autonomous in thought and action that I will discuss in the concluding chapter.

*Discipline and Punish* and *The History of Sexuality*, which unmask the mechanisms of discipline and regulation behind normative justice, also uncover the techniques of examination and confession through which the norm is manifested as subjective experience. These texts then logically precede Foucault's critical history of subjectivity and ethico-morality: critical historical critique is not indicative of his flight from the nihilistic implications of archæology and genealogy, which I have shown is not only incorrect but a charge—McNay's—that personifies the standard

## *A Critical History of Subjectivity and Ethico-Morality*

conflation of Foucault's anti-humanism with a rejection of enlightenment.<sup>1</sup> Rather, *Discipline and Punish* and *The History of Sexuality* intimate Foucault's second genealogical question through which he reconceptualises capillary *pouvoir* after 1977,<sup>2</sup> and I begin this chapter with his answer to what is the nature of *pouvoir*?, governmentality, which he develops in lectures at the *Collège de France* in 1977-1978 and 1979-1980. In particular, he highlights governmentality's inheritance of a technology of political rationality from *pastoral-pouvoir*. It links the exercise of *somato-* to *bio-pouvoir*, and produces the material submission of humanism's freedom that depends on political liberty or political liberation.

To overcome humanist critical thought's immaturity, Foucault's genealogy evolves into a critical history of the subject of desire's experience of sex,<sup>3</sup> and I examine his pursuit of maturity that depends on a conceptual distinction between ethics-oriented and code-oriented moralities. In the former, subjectivity is constituted through an ascetic practical relation to self (*rapport à soi*), and in the latter via a hermeneutics of the self that is mediated by a relation to other (*rapport à autrui*), which defines the constitution of freedom in humanism. Whilst some commentators question Foucault's critical history of antiquity,<sup>4</sup> I argue that it is the subtlety of his conceptualisation of ethics as the forgotten moment of morality that is crucial to, and corroborative of, his commitment to articulate how to act freely in the present.<sup>5</sup> I focus on the constitution, via a hermeneutics of the self, of the monk's moral identity in early christianity, which albeit chronologically posterior can be contrasted with the constitution of ethical subjectivity through practices of the self in greek and græco-roman antiquity. In *The Use of Pleasure*, ethico-political practices of the self demand an agonistic relation to self. Outwith its ancient condition of possibility of asymmetrical relations to others, it is a model for maturity *vis-à-vis pouvoir/savoir*. Finally, I discern in *The Care of the Self* the ethico-social practices of the self, who is situated within symmetrical relations to others, but who avoids mediation by them. As I will claim with critical ontology in chapter

<sup>1</sup> McNay, *Foucault*, p. 133 and pp. 102-133.

<sup>2</sup> In addition to conceptions of capillary *pouvoir* as relations of communication and relations of production, Foucault perceives it as the ontologically prior relations of government between subjects. Foucault, "Radioscope de Michel Foucault", pp. 798-799.

<sup>3</sup> Foucault, "An Aesthetics of Existence", p. 48.

<sup>4</sup> See, for example, Bevis, Cohen and Kendall, "Archaeologizing genealogy"; Poster, "Foucault and the Tyranny of Greece". Notwithstanding that they were his colleagues, Paul Veyne and Jean-Pierre Vernant, respectively, professor of the History of Rome and Comparative Religions of the Ancient World at the *Collège de France*, support, albeit with nuances, Foucault's interpretation of antiquity. Veyne, "The Final Foucault and His Ethics"; Vernant, "The Individual within the City-State".

<sup>5</sup> Davidson, "Ethics as Ascetics", p. 69.

## *A Critical History of Subjectivity and Ethico-Morality*

7, Foucault's critical historical critique of ethico-morality, which discloses an ancient practice of freedom at the limits of experience through an agonistic process of becoming free, is the basis for an enlightened, post-humanist conception of maturity in the present.

### 6.i. The Nature of *Pouvoir*

After *The History of Sexuality*, Foucault plans to "show how 'sex' is historically subordinate to sexuality", and he suggests that, because one does not resist power when one says yes to sex, it is sexuality "we must break away from, if we aim ... to counter the grips of power with the claims of bodies, pleasures, and knowledges".<sup>6</sup> Although he eventually proposes a critical history of knowledge—antiquity's system of thought—rather than bodies and pleasures to resist *pouvoir/savoir*, Foucault's immediate purpose in 1976 is to investigate how subjects have their experience of misery historically constituted by the *scientia sexualis*.<sup>7</sup> For the next ten years,<sup>8</sup> he intends to decipher the relationship between normative experience and mechanisms and institutions of *pouvoir/savoir*.<sup>9</sup> "The domain we must analyze in the different studies that will follow the present volume", he proposes at the end of *The History of Sexuality*, is the deployment of sexuality:

its formation on the basis of the Christian notion of the flesh [*The Body and the Flesh*], and its development through the four great strategies that were deployed in the nineteenth century: the sexualization of children [*The Children's Crusade*], the hysterization of women [*Woman, Mother and Hysteric*], the specification of the perverted [*Perverts*], and the regulation of populations [*Population and Races*].<sup>10</sup>

Although he writes these books,<sup>11</sup> by 1983 Foucault abandons his project altogether, as understanding sexuality and the problem of sex is boring.<sup>12</sup> The *volte-face* springs from his genealogical critique of the techniques of examination and confession, which constitute the subject of desire's subjective experience in mediæval christianity and are essential research for *The Body and the Flesh*. This in

<sup>6</sup> Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, p. 157.

<sup>7</sup> Foucault, "Power and Sex", pp. 112-113.

<sup>8</sup> Foucault, "Le pouvoir, une bête magnifique", pp. 380-381.

<sup>9</sup> Foucault, "Sexualité et vérité", p. 137.

<sup>10</sup> Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, pp. 113-114; Bernauer, "Michel Foucault's Ecstatic Thinking", pp. 49-50 and p. 76, f. 14.

<sup>11</sup> Foucault, "An Aesthetics of Existence", p. 47.

<sup>12</sup> Foucault, "On the Genealogy of Ethics", p. 340.

## *A Critical History of Subjectivity and Ethico-Morality*

turn refers him back to early christianity and, finally, the modes of subjectivity in greek and græco-roman antiquity,<sup>13</sup> such that after *The History of Sexuality* Foucault's genealogical critique displays a re-orientation from normativity to subjectivity, which is my prerogative here, whilst the submission of subjectivity by the political rationality that is at the heart of humanism's attempt to realise enlightenment is the topic in the next section.

In section 5.iv. I claimed that, in answer to the question, how is *pouvoir* exercised?, Foucault investigates the productive mechanisms of *somato-pouvoir* and *bio-pouvoir*. *Discipline and Punish* and *The History of Sexuality* are necessary criticisms of those who misconceive power "as a unitary system organised around a centre, which at the same time is its source, and that tends through an internal dynamic to continuously extend itself".<sup>14</sup> Further to his critique of a theory of power's mechanisms of repression, Foucault questions the adequacy of humanism's second assumption, which suggests that the juridical state encapsulates what is the nature of *pouvoir*?. In contrast, Foucault's reply represents his redirection from *pouvoir/savoir* to governmentality, normativity to subjectivity,<sup>15</sup> and like the productive mechanisms and the techniques masked by, but indispensable to, the exercise of mechanisms of repression, governmentality is Foucault's conceptualisation of juridical power's condition of possibility, capillary *pouvoir*. Still, "I don't want to say that the State isn't important", Foucault says in anticipation of his critics,

what I want to say is that relations of power ... necessarily extend beyond the limits of the State ... . [F]or all the omnipotence of its apparatuses, [the state] is far from being able to occupy the whole field of actual power relations, and ... the State can only operate on the basis of other, already existing power relations.<sup>16</sup>

Foucault defines already existing capillary *pouvoir* as relations of government, in which the conduct of the other or others is at stake.<sup>17</sup> By nature, these relations produce subjects and daily existence,<sup>18</sup> and in his 1977-1978 lectures at the *Collège de France, Sécurité, Territoire et Population*, Foucault's theme is the passage from the

<sup>13</sup> Foucault, "Preface to *The History of Sexuality*, Volume II", p. 333.

<sup>14</sup> *Pouvoir* is "plus ou moins confusément pensé comme un système unitaire, organisé autour d'un centre qui en est en même temps la source, et qui est porté par sa dynamique interne à s'étendre toujours". Foucault, "Subjectivité et vérité", p. 214.

<sup>15</sup> Foucault, "The Subject and Power", p. 219.

<sup>16</sup> Foucault, "Truth and Power", p. 122.

<sup>17</sup> Foucault, "Subjectivité et vérité", p. 214.

<sup>18</sup> Foucault, "L'intellectuel et les pouvoirs", p. 751.

## *A Critical History of Subjectivity and Ethico-Morality*

territorial monarchical state of the renaissance epoch to the state that is defined by its population in the classical epoch. The latter politicises governmentality through the integration, into juridical power, of the *somato-* and *bio-pouvoir* which govern subjects.<sup>19</sup> Specifically, in his fourth lecture, “La ‘gouvernementalité’”, Foucault speaks of a new problematic: “[h]ow to govern, how to be governed, how to govern others, and who should we accept to be governed by, and what to do to be the best possible governor”.<sup>20</sup> Later, in his 1979-1980 lectures, *Du gouvernement des vivants*, Foucault concretises the notion of governmentality. His research into the techniques of examination and confession reveals that, up to the end of mediæval christianity, *pastoral-pouvoir* exercises relations of government, while it is the model for the juridical state’s government of its population, whether children, people’s consciences or households.<sup>21</sup>

The emergence from the late 1970s of governmentality as Foucault’s definition of the nature of *pouvoir* signals the thematic progression from a genealogical critique of normativity to a critical historical critique of subjectivity and ethico-morality. In other words, the subject is the confluence of techniques like confession and examination, which are exercised over others and effect domination, with techniques of the self that enable the subject, either of his own accord or in collaboration with others,

to effect a number of operations on his body or soul, his thoughts, actions and mode of being; and to transform himself in an effort to attain a state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection or immortality. ... I call ‘governmentality’ the meeting place between techniques of domination exercised over others and techniques of the self.<sup>22</sup>

Foucault admits that a reason for the shift from normativity to subjectivity is that, in his genealogy of how *pouvoir* is exercised, “I perhaps insisted too much on the techniques of domination”.<sup>23</sup> Still, he is clear that *pouvoir* is not discipline, which

<sup>19</sup> Foucault, “Sécurité, territoire et population”, pp. 719-720.

<sup>20</sup> “Comment se gouverner, comment être gouverner, comment gouverner les autres, par qui doit-on accepter d’être gouverné, comment faire pour être le meilleur gouverneur possible”. Foucault, “La ‘gouvernementalité’”, p. 636.

<sup>21</sup> Foucault, “Du gouvernement des vivants”, p. 125.

<sup>22</sup> Techniques of the self “permettent aux individus d’effectuer, seuls ou avec l’aide d’autres, un certain nombres d’opérations sur leur corps et leur âme, leurs pensées, leurs conduites, leur mode d’être; de se transformer afin d’atteindre un certain état de bonheur, de pureté, de sagesse, de perfection ou d’immortalité. ... J’appelle ‘gouvernementalité’ la rencontre entre les techniques de domination exercées sur les autres et les techniques de soi”. Foucault, “Les techniques de soi”, p. 785.

<sup>23</sup> “J’ai peut-être trop insisté sur les techniques de domination et de pouvoir”. Foucault, “Les techniques de soi”, p. 787.



## *A Critical History of Subjectivity and Ethico-Morality*

is only one of *pouvoir's* mechanisms, and Foucault readily speaks of consensual disciplines.<sup>24</sup> This corresponds with his methodological pains "to indicate the limits of what I wanted to achieve, ... . [Somato- and bio-*pouvoir*] can in no way, to my mind, be equated with a general analytics of every possible power relation".<sup>25</sup> It is, Foucault says, incorrect to "impute to me the idea that power is a system of domination which controls everything and which leaves no room for freedom".<sup>26</sup> Instead, domination arises only when the "relations of power are fixed in such a way that they are perpetually asymmetrical [sic] and the margin of liberty is extremely limited".<sup>27</sup>

A genealogical critique of governmentality implies that the nature of *pouvoir* is neither an evil fluid,<sup>28</sup> nor a capacity to alter, consume or destroy things, and it does not preclude communicative power that is conveyed semantically. Rather, the regulated and co-ordinated systems of discipline and regulation invigilate, ever more economically and rationally, the conduct of the subject by productive mechanisms and techniques, resources of communication and relations of government.<sup>29</sup> On this understanding, *le pouvoir* in the substantive sense does not, *a propos* of consent or delegation, actually exist. Instead, it is put into action by the political rationality that exercises governmentality.<sup>30</sup> Capillary *pouvoir*, like the air we breathe, is the place into which the subject is thrown. It is always already there, and the subject cannot be outside governmentality.<sup>31</sup> By implication, the foucauldian critical principle to maintain at all times is "to ask oneself what proportion of nonconsensuality is implied in ... a power relation, ... . [O]ne must not be for consensuality, but ... against nonconsensuality".<sup>32</sup>

Finally, the subject over whom *pouvoir* is exercised is indispensable to governmentality. He must be clearly recognised and maintained as a subject who acts in an open field.<sup>33</sup> In this respect, an analysis of governmentality looks, firstly, at the exercise of productive mechanisms, which structure the possible field of

<sup>24</sup> "Take, for example, ... love relationships. To exercise power over another, in a sort of open strategic game, where things could be reversed, that is not evil. That is part of love, passion, sexual pleasure". Foucault, "The ethic of the care for the self", p. 18.

<sup>25</sup> Foucault, "Politics and Ethics", p. 380.

<sup>26</sup> Foucault, "The ethic of the care for the self", p. 13.

<sup>27</sup> Foucault, "The ethic of the care for the self", p. 12.

<sup>28</sup> Foucault, "L'intellectuel et les pouvoirs", p. 750.

<sup>29</sup> Foucault, "The Subject and Power", pp. 217-219; Foucault, "On Power", p. 105.

<sup>30</sup> Foucault, "The Confession of the Flesh", p. 198.

<sup>31</sup> Foucault, "Powers and Strategies", p. 141.

<sup>32</sup> Foucault, "Politics and Ethics", p. 379.

<sup>33</sup> Foucault, "The ethic of the care for the self", p. 11; Foucault, "The Subject and Power", pp. 220-221.

## *A Critical History of Subjectivity and Ethico-Morality*

action and direct the conduct of others; secondly, although there is an identity between capillary *pouvoir* and society, only a critical history of institutional techniques of government can uncover domination and avoid a fatalistic reduction of society to *pouvoir*;<sup>34</sup> thirdly, an analysis must be made of governmentality's strategic relationships, which presuppose resistance.<sup>35</sup> In the end, Foucault's genealogical critique of normativity and *pouvoir* divulge the productive mechanisms and techniques of *somato-* and *bio-pouvoir/savoir*, which thwart humanism's enlightenment, whilst the concept of governmentality recapitulates the point that I made in section 1.ii. of freedom as the *vis-à-vis* of *pouvoir*. Not, that is, political liberty that is prior to power, or political liberation that is processed through it. Instead, what Foucault has in mind is an agonistic freedom,

[because w]hen one defines the exercise of power as a mode of action upon the actions of others, when one characterizes these actions by the government of men by other men—in the broadest sense of the term—one includes an important element: freedom. Power is exercised only over free subjects, and only insofar as they are free. By this we mean individual or collective subjects who are faced with a field of possibilities in which several ways of behaving, several reactions and diverse comportments may be realized. ... The relationship between power and freedom's refusal to submit cannot therefore be separated. ... At the very heart of the power relationship, and constantly provoking it, are the recalcitrance of the will and the intransigence of freedom. Rather than speaking of an essential freedom, it would be better to speak of an 'agonism' — of a relationship which is at the same time reciprocal incitation and struggle; less of a face-to-face confrontation which paralyzes both sides than a permanent provocation.<sup>36</sup>

### **6.ii. Foucault's Critique of Humanism's Immature Subjectivity**

If the nature of *pouvoir* is the government of men by other men, and its exercise is a mode of action upon the actions of others, then governmentality's presupposition of an agonistic freedom, which is grounded in a recalcitrant will *qua* provocative other of *pouvoir*, equates to an ontology of the subject. It invites an analysis of the techniques and mechanisms that govern being and determine the relations to self and other, and which provide resources for how to act freely in the present. So, if freedom is in question, the confluence of freedom and *pouvoir* in the subject can be analysed from the point of view of subjectivity; or, where *pouvoir* is at stake, from

<sup>34</sup> Foucault, "The Subject and Power", pp. 222-223.

<sup>35</sup> Foucault, "Powers and Strategies", p. 142.

<sup>36</sup> Foucault, "The Subject and Power", pp. 221-222.

## *A Critical History of Subjectivity and Ethico-Morality*

governmentality.<sup>37</sup> As Foucault explains in his 1980-1981 lectures, *Subjectivité et vérité*,

the history of the 'care' and the 'techniques' of the self would then be a way of doing the history of subjectivity ... [by investigating] the putting into place and the transformations ... of the 'relations to self', with their technical armature and their effects of knowledge. One could thus take up, under another aspect, the question of 'governmentality': the government of self by the self in his articulation through relations to others.<sup>38</sup>

Hence, before I move on to distinguish ethics from within morality in the next section, this section concludes the explicit study of *pouvoir* with an analysis of the political rationality at the centre of governmentality in the modern epoch. After the erasure of man from, and the cost of confined exclusion, objectification and subjection inherent to, epistemologico-political critique, I want to show how humanism's formal conception of autonomy, which is actualised through recognition, fails to uphold maturity in respect of the submission of subjectivity that is effected by a political rationality fashioned after *pastoral-pouvoir*.

Foucault acknowledges that to conceive of the nature of *somato-* and *bio-pouvoir* as governmentality, and the exercise of *pouvoir* by productive mechanisms, poses an analytical problem: without the juridical state, "isn't power simply a form of warlike domination"?<sup>39</sup> The question, Foucault's interviewer ponders in 1977, is whether it is possible to conceive of the relations of government between the micro-bodies of subjects and the molar-body of the population outwith domination? In response, Foucault says that "I believe that one must keep in view the fact that ... [in] the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, a new technology of the exercise of power also emerged".<sup>40</sup> The new technology is political rationality, an amalgam of (the) reason of (the) state and (a) theory of (the) police. It colonises the relations that govern subjects, and political rationality is modelled on pre-modern *pastoral-pouvoir* that ensures and sustains the lives of every christian soul.<sup>41</sup> By 1979, for instance,

<sup>37</sup> Although, as Pasquel Pasquino argues, freedom and relations of government are inseparable, because Foucault problematises subjectivity *vis-à-vis Lebensführung*, or the conduct of life. Pasquino, "Michel Foucault (1926-84)", p. 42.

<sup>38</sup> "L'histoire du 'souci' et des 'techniques' de soi serait donc une manière de faire l'histoire de la subjectivité ... à travers la mise en place et les transformations ... des 'rapports à soi-même', avec leur armature technique et leurs effets de savoir. Et on pourrait ainsi reprendre sous un autre aspect la question de la 'gouvernementalité': le gouvernement de soi par soi dans son articulation avec les rapports à autrui". Foucault, "Subjectivité et vérité", p. 214.

<sup>39</sup> Foucault, "Truth and Power", p. 123.

<sup>40</sup> Foucault, "Truth and Power", p. 124.

<sup>41</sup> Foucault, "Politics and Reason", p. 67.

## *A Critical History of Subjectivity and Ethico-Morality*

Foucault tells his Californian audience at Stanford that what “I am working on now is the problem of individuality – or, I should say, self-identity as referred to the problem of ‘individualizing power’”.<sup>42</sup>

Foucault’s critical history of the hermeneutic and practical care of the self (*epimeleia heautou*), which I discuss in the following next, also highlights the centrality in the transition from antiquity to christianity of the reformulation of this ethic into the care of others (*epimeleia tonallon*).<sup>43</sup> What the care of others signifies is the individualising technology of *pastoral-pouvoir*. Foucault argues that the idea of “a shepherd followed by a flock wasn’t familiar to the Greeks and Romans”, whereas in ancient hebraic texts, which chronicle governmentality in Egypt, Assyria and Judea, the metaphor of the shepherd-flock is ubiquitous.<sup>44</sup> In the exercise of *pastoral-pouvoir*, the shepherd wields power over his flock; he gathers together, guides and leads them; he ensures the salvation of his flock through a personalised and purposeful kindness; and he serves his flock out of devotion that requires him to keep watch over them.<sup>45</sup> At the end of antiquity in western Europe, Foucault argues, there:

evolved a ... technology of power treating the ... majority of men as a flock with a few as shepherds. ... [T]he development of ‘pastoral technology’ in the management of men profoundly disrupted the structures of ancient society.<sup>46</sup>

From this excursus, Foucault explains the transformation from antiquity’s to christianity’s system of thought in terms of the technology of *pastoral-pouvoir*. Along the experiential axis of subjectivity, a relation to self is usurped by a relation to other, which incites the subject to hermeneutically render truth from the core of his essential being. At the experiential level of normativity, Foucault says that in antiquity “the political problem is that of the relation between the one and the many in the framework of the city and its citizens”, whereas with *pastoral-pouvoir* it “concerns the lives of individuals ... [and] seems to have nothing to do with the game of the city surviving through the sacrifice of the citizens”.<sup>47</sup> Nevertheless, in spite of discontinuous systems of thought between antiquity’s governmentality and early christian *pastoral-pouvoir*, “[o]ur societies proved to be really demonic since

<sup>42</sup> Foucault, “Politics and Reason”, p. 59.

<sup>43</sup> Foucault, “On the Genealogy of Ethics”, p. 370.

<sup>44</sup> Foucault, “Politics and Reason”, p. 60 and p. 63.

<sup>45</sup> Foucault, “Politics and Reason”, pp. 61-64.

<sup>46</sup> Foucault, “Politics and Reason”, p. 71.

<sup>47</sup> Foucault, “Politics and Reason”, p. 67 and p. 71.

## *A Critical History of Subjectivity and Ethico-Morality*

they happened to combine those two games—the city-citizen and the shepherd-flock game—in what we call the modern state”.<sup>48</sup>

For Foucault, the birth of the modern state after the decline of feudal structures and the end of the protestant reformation, together with the catholic counter-reformation, is a crucial moment in the history of the government of individuals by their own verity. Via the political rationality implemented to exercise post-sixteenth century monarchical power, reason of state elucidates the difference between the government of the state and that of the world or family, and a theory of police constitutes the discursive objects of the state’s rational activity. Reason of state is an art of government that necessitates rational *connaissance*.<sup>49</sup> It specifies the literal *raison d’être* of government to be no more than the re-enforcement of the strength of the state, which is the sum of each of its parts *qua* juridical subjects.<sup>50</sup> In parallel, a theory of police is a science for the urban, economic, social, political and cultural administration of the relations between the subject and things.<sup>51</sup> Whereas politics is a negative task of internal and external defence, the role of the police is to endow each subject with life as a means to supply the state with strength. Based on a statistical analysis of a newly constituted discursive object, the population,<sup>52</sup> the police execute their authority along the lines of the shepherd’s watch over his flock.<sup>53</sup> Indeed, by the eighteenth century, a theory of police designates a governmental rationality that “aspires to be a self-maintained and all encompassing system of rules for the controlled government of the conduct of subjects, in which intervention would be unnecessary”.<sup>54</sup>

Until 1789, Foucault argues, reason of state and a theory of police vie with a machiavellian *Conseils au Prince*, which is concerned with the sovereign’s relation to the domain of the state’s territory, to be the pre-eminent art of government. But at the start of the modern epoch reason of state, with its domain of the population that is specified by the police, is integrated into a rousseauian science of the art of government. They combine in respect of state formation in Germany and Italy, or in America and napoleonic France of the maintenance of state sovereignty via the pre-

<sup>48</sup> Foucault, “Politics and Reason”, p. 71.

<sup>49</sup> Foucault, “Politics and Reason”, pp. 71-76.

<sup>50</sup> Foucault, “La ‘gouvernementalité’”, p. 648.

<sup>51</sup> Foucault, “La ‘gouvernementalité’”, p. 645.

<sup>52</sup> Foucault, “Politics and Reason”, pp. 77-83.

<sup>53</sup> Foucault, “La ‘gouvernementalité’”, pp. 641-642.

<sup>54</sup> “Au XVIIe et au XVIIIe siècle, la ‘police’ désignait un programme de rationalité gouvernementale. On peut le définir comme le projet de créer un système de réglementation de la conduite générale des individus où tout serait contrôlé, au point que les choses se maintiendraient d’elles-mêmes, sans qu’une intervention soit nécessaire”. Foucault, “Espace, savoir et pouvoir”, p. 272.

## *A Critical History of Subjectivity and Ethico-Morality*

eminent science of government, liberalism.<sup>55</sup>

As a critical discourse of political rationality, liberalism seeks to rationalise the government of the actions of subjects through the promotion of mechanisms that have the maximum effect at the minimum politico-economic cost.<sup>56</sup> In France, for example, Rousseau's critical thought, which includes elements of what Foucault terms the juridical, administrative and government state, is the turning point for a liberal governmentalisation of the state.<sup>57</sup> Still, in the modern epoch of governmentality a *société de discipline*, with its mechanisms of discipline and regulation, does not replace a *société de souveraineté* and its mechanisms of repression, and nor does a *société de gouvernement*, which practices the rationalisation of the mechanisms that act upon the actions of others in the government of men by other men, supersede a *société de discipline*.<sup>58</sup> Rather, Foucault posits that there is "a triangle: sovereignty-discipline-governmental management, where the principal target is the population and the essential mechanisms are apparatuses of security".<sup>59</sup>

Just as the disciplines are relocated between the seventeenth and nineteenth century from schools, hospitals, barracks and factories to the police, who exercise them over the citizen, at the start of the classical epoch mediæval christianity's *pastoral-pouvoir* serves as the functional prototype for the political rationality at the centre of the modern juridico-administrative-governmental state.<sup>60</sup> Whilst they both produce the truth of the subject's identity, *pastoral-pouvoir's* original role as the governmentality of the catholic church contrasts with the modern state's political rationality. The latter is socio-economically focused (rather than salvation oriented), it upholds the principle of sovereignty (as opposed to being oblationary) and it is juridical (instead of individualising).<sup>61</sup> Political rationality is a matrix of individualisation, which integrates the state's flock as a population and each sheep as a subject of the social body. It is exercised on the basis of salvation in terms of

<sup>55</sup> Foucault, "La 'gouvernementalité'", pp. 635-638.

<sup>56</sup> Foucault, "Naissance de la biopolitique", pp. 818-822.

<sup>57</sup> Foucault, "La 'gouvernementalité'", pp. 656-657.

<sup>58</sup> Foucault, "La 'gouvernementalité'", pp. 653-654.

<sup>59</sup> "On a, en fait, un triangle: souveraineté-discipline-gestion gouvernementale dont la cible principale est la population et dont les mécanismes essentiels sont les dispositifs de sécurité". Foucault, "La 'gouvernementalité'", p. 654.

<sup>60</sup> Between early and mediæval christianity, *pastoral-pouvoir* is re-elaborated. By the fifteenth century, a moral tie links the pastor and each subject; the subject is completely dependent upon the pastor; there is an exchange of knowledge between the pastor and the subject about his material needs, public actions and personal thoughts; and the subject's *telos* of the mortification of this world in the name of the next is mediated by the pastor. Foucault, "Politics and Reason", pp. 68-70.

<sup>61</sup> Foucault, "The Subject and Power", p. 214.

## *A Critical History of Subjectivity and Ethico-Morality*

health, well-being, security and protection, which gives rise to institutions such as the police or welfare societies, as well as to apparatuses of *pouvoir/savoir* and their expert human scientists, who produce quantitative and analytical *connaissance* of the population and the subject.<sup>62</sup>

The mechanisms of discipline and regulation, and techniques of examination and confession which are exercised by the apparatuses of *somato-* and *bio-pouvoir*, are co-extensive with a political rationality that is modelled on *pastoral-pouvoir*. Together, they effect a society of normalisation that “categorizes the individual, marks him by his own individuality, attaches him to his own identity, imposes a law of truth on him which he must recognize and which others have to recognise in him”.<sup>63</sup> Whilst the madman, delinquent and pervert comprise the externalities of autonomous citizens and their community of mutual recognition, the personal price each citizen pays as a subject of humanism’s experience of enlightenment is normalisation, which is antithetical to maturity. For Foucault, this accounts for the pertinence, within the juridico-administrative-governmental state, of contemporary struggles against the submission of subjectivity to an identity determined to be true.<sup>64</sup> In his intimation of the failure of humanism’s freedom *vis-à-vis* the “simultaneous individualization and totalization of modern power structures”,<sup>65</sup> Foucault says the issue is not whether a society free of constraints is possible, but if the strategic games of freedom *vis-à-vis pouvoir* take place on an open field, for “a system of constraints becomes truly intolerable when the individuals who are affected by it don’t have the means of modifying it”.<sup>66</sup>

Humanism’s axes of objective, normative and subjective experience constitute a system of constraints which, if not truly intolerable, are tolerated because they purport to operate on the basis of truth. In respect of the apparatus of the *scientia sexualis*, for example, subjectivity is mediated through the imaginary point of sex due to the belief that it harbours a truth that mirrors an essential being.<sup>67</sup> Techniques of examination and confession produce immaturity because, firstly, it is

<sup>62</sup> Foucault, “The Subject and Power”, pp. 214-215.

<sup>63</sup> Foucault, “The Subject and Power”, p. 212.

<sup>64</sup> In contrast to early modern struggles against domination (ethnic, social and religious) and nineteenth century struggles against exploitation (the terms of separation of individuals from what they produce), struggles against subjection are transversal and against the immediate effects of *pouvoir*, rather than a main enemy to be overthrown in the future; they concern the status of the individual *qua* right to be different and with others; and they are against the government of individualisation and a *régime du savoir*, in which *connaissance* and expertise effect *pouvoir*. Foucault, “The Subject and Power”, pp. 211-212.

<sup>65</sup> Foucault, “The Subject and Power”, p. 216.

<sup>66</sup> Foucault, “Sexual Choice, Sexual Act”, p. 294.

<sup>67</sup> Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, p. 158.

### *A Critical History of Subjectivity and Ethico-Morality*

assumed that sex is a generative principle of meaning, whence intelligibility or autonomy. Secondly, sex is perceived as a link between particular desire and the existence of that desire in history, hence identity or recognition. A will to know sex assumes that the subject affirms the essential rights of sex against *pouvoir/savoir*, yet to begin with the desire for sex is constituted by the *scientia sexualis*' norm, or the "mirage in which we think we see ourselves reflected".<sup>68</sup> There is no realm of primal freedom which, *a propos* of knowledge, is demarcated from power by truth.<sup>69</sup> In the experience of sex that is mediated by humanist critical thought, autonomy and recognition materially fasten the subject to discipline and regulation. Foucault argues that we should refuse what we are *qua* subjects of humanist experience, whence the priority of critique along a nietzschean path to enlightenment and an ontology that addresses finitude.

The political, ethical, social, philosophical problem ... is not to try to liberate the individual from the state, and from the state's institutions, but to liberate us ... from the type of individualization which is linked to the state. We have to promote new forms of subjectivity through the refusal of this kind of individuality which has been imposed on us for several centuries.<sup>70</sup>

#### 6.iii. A Critical History of Ethico-Morality

To resist the political rationality that exercises the *somato-* and *bio-pouvoir* of humanism, Foucault suggests that maturity "can only come from attacking ... political rationality's very roots",<sup>71</sup> which requires a kantian type of critique that keeps "watch over the excessive powers of political rationality".<sup>72</sup> By 1983, Foucault homes in on the very roots of subjectivity, the techniques of the self.<sup>73</sup> A year later, in *The Use of Pleasure*, he speaks of his shift from how the self recognises himself as a normative subject with regard to the *scientia sexualis*,<sup>74</sup> to the subjective axis of the latter and the "the relationship of the self with self and the forming of oneself as a subject" via the discovery, in desire, of the truth of one's being.<sup>75</sup>

<sup>68</sup> Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, p. 157.

<sup>69</sup> Foucault, "Powers and Strategies", pp. 140-142.

<sup>70</sup> Foucault, "The Subject and Power", p. 216.

<sup>71</sup> Foucault, "Politics and Reason", p. 85.

<sup>72</sup> Foucault, "Politics and Reason", p. 58.

<sup>73</sup> Foucault, "On the Genealogy of Ethics", p. 342.

<sup>74</sup> Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, pp. 105-106.

<sup>75</sup> Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, p. 6. and p. 5.



## *A Critical History of Subjectivity and Ethico-Morality*

The subject of desire inspires Foucault's critical history of the hermeneutics of the self in early christianity, which in turn spurs on his research into the practices of the self in antiquity, both of which contribute to his wish to write the history of the "games of truth and error through which being is historically constituted as experience".<sup>76</sup> In his search for "forms of relation to the self" that are unaffected by modern objectivity and normativity,<sup>77</sup> Foucault's first port of call is "the Christian notion of the flesh",<sup>78</sup> where (for *The Body and the Flesh*, the planned volume two of *The History of Sexuality*) he analyses the experience of mediæval christianity's sexual morality of the sacrament of penance.<sup>79</sup> This research eventually sees the light of day in the guise of the *pastoral-pouvoir* implicit within governmentality that I dealt with above, and as a study of the axis of subjectivity in early christianity's sexual morality of *les aveux de la chair*, whence *The Confessions of the Flesh*, the never to be published volume four of Foucault's history of sexuality which exists as a series of interviews and articles.<sup>80</sup> Insofar as early christianity's moral discourse "diverted the practices of self towards the hermeneutics of self and the deciphering of oneself as a subject of desire",<sup>81</sup> I discuss in this section Foucault's analytical demarcation of ethics from within morality before, in sections 6.iv., 6.v. and 6.vi., I contrast the constitution of moral identity in the sexual morality of the confessions of the flesh—the model for humanism—with the ethical subjectivity constituted in antiquity's sexual ethics of the use of pleasure and the care of the self, which is Foucault's model for enlightenment.

Foucault's progression from the archæological and genealogical critiques of objectivity and normativity to a critical historical critique of subjectivity is motivated by an obstinate curiosity, though "not the curiosity that seeks to assimilate what is proper for one to know, but that which enables one to get free of oneself".<sup>82</sup> It is born of a knowledge that his death is imminent, and the critical historian displays a stoic indifference as he combines the personal with the political

<sup>76</sup> Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, pp. 6-7.

<sup>77</sup> Foucault, "Preface to *The History of Sexuality*, Volume II", p. 339.

<sup>78</sup> Foucault, "The Confession of the Flesh", p. 217.

<sup>79</sup> Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, p. 68 and p. 21, note.

<sup>80</sup> Foucault completes *The Confessions of the Flesh* after volume two, *The Use of Pleasure*, and it is his inspiration for volume three, *The Care of the Self*. However, although he drew up the final draft of *The Confessions of the Flesh* in April, 1984, his death two months later prevented its publication, whilst his will of three statements—*la mort, pas l'invalidité, et pas de publication posthume*—demands that it remain unpublished. Foucault, "On the Genealogy of Ethics", pp. 341-342; Gordon, "Man of action in a world of thought", p. 9.

<sup>81</sup> Foucault, "The Concern for Truth", p. 260.

<sup>82</sup> Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, p. 8.

## *A Critical History of Subjectivity and Ethico-Morality*

along his nietzschean path to enlightenment,<sup>83</sup> where to think critically is tantamount to a critique of thought that shapes how to act freely,

[for t]here are times in life when the question of knowing if one can think differently than one thinks, and perceive differently than one sees, is absolutely necessary if one is to go on looking and reflecting at all. But, then, what is philosophy today – philosophical activity, I mean – if it is not the critical work that thought brings to bear on itself?<sup>84</sup>

Foucault's critical history of subjectivity is an investigation into the ubiquitous objectivation of sex—its pleasures, acts and desires—for moral solicitude. His focus is an epoch's objective, normative and subjective experience of sex "through which being offers itself to be, necessarily, thought".<sup>85</sup> Instead of a history of solutions and alternatives, Foucault investigates *problématiques*.<sup>86</sup> He performs a nominalist problematization of "the totality of discursive or non-discursive practices that introduces something into the play of true and false and constitutes it as an object for thought".<sup>87</sup> Because he "think[s] problematically rather than question[s] and answer[s] dialectically",<sup>88</sup> Foucault's critical history of the desiring subject is an archæology of problematisations and a genealogy of practices.<sup>89</sup> He exchanges a history of morality based on interdictions for a history of ethical problematisations and practices of the self,<sup>90</sup> as "men are not much more inventive when it comes to interdictions than they are when it comes to pleasures".<sup>91</sup>

Typically, the history of morality from antiquity to modernity centres on four monotonous themes of austerity: sex as an evil; procreative monogamy; a condemnation of same sex relations; and a valorisation of self-restraint.<sup>92</sup> Foucault,

<sup>83</sup> Flynn, "Foucault as Parrhesiast", p. 102. Veyne recalls, for example, that "during the last eight months of ... [Foucault's] life, the writing of ... [*The Use of Pleasure* and *The Care of the Self*] played the role for him that philosophical writing and the personal journal played in ancient philosophy: that of a work of the self on the self, a self-stylization". Veyne, "The Final Foucault and His Ethics", p. 8.

<sup>84</sup> Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, pp. 8-9.

<sup>85</sup> Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, p. 11.

<sup>86</sup> Foucault, "On the Genealogy of Ethics", p. 343.

<sup>87</sup> Foucault, "The Concern for Truth", p. 257.

<sup>88</sup> Foucault, "Theatrum Philosophicum", p. 186.

<sup>89</sup> Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, p. 13.

<sup>90</sup> Foucault, "Usage des plaisirs et techniques de soi", p. 545.

<sup>91</sup> Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, p. 32.

<sup>92</sup> Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, p. 250. Foucault speaks of these four basic themes in terms of the expression of a fear (about the consequences of masturbation, for instance), an ideal of conduct (usually that of marital fidelity), a threatening image (typically, the homosexual's inversion of gender

## *A Critical History of Subjectivity and Ethico-Morality*

however, argues that it is incorrect to infer a continuity in the way in which morality solicits being from sex, and an even greater error to suppose its toleration in antiquity and a subsequent prohibition.<sup>93</sup> Rather, austerity in antiquity is a luxury supplement to common laws and customs, which implore styles of moderation from the citizen in the areas where he governs the conduct and actions of others and himself. Originally, these themes of sexual austerity represent a quadri-thematics of problematisations around “the life of the body, the institution of marriage, relations between men, and the existence of wisdom”,<sup>94</sup> which are reformulated in other epochs as an expression of prohibition. In place of a history of moral interdictions manifest as austerity, Foucault asks why the practice of pleasures *vis-à-vis* the body, wife, boys and truth becomes a matter for debate, or “[h]ow did sexual behavior ... come to be conceived as a domain of moral experience”?<sup>95</sup>

Foucault’s shift of the analysis from interdictions to problematisations, history to critical history, enables his delineation of ethics from within morality. Usually, morality is defined as a moral code, or values and rules of action recommended through prescriptive institutions.<sup>96</sup> In addition, morality refers to the real actions of the subject in relation to a moral code, and these rules of conduct comprise the morality of behaviours. A third aspect of morality concerns the manner in which the self ought to form himself as an ethical subject in reference to the moral code. Foucault calls this the mode of subjectivation, or “the procedure by which one obtains the constitution of a subject, or more precisely, of a subjectivity”.<sup>97</sup>

The style and manner of the self’s elaboration of himself into an ethical subject of moral conduct depends on the moral code’s stipulations about the four constitutive elements of subjectivation: the ethical substance (the part of the individual that is earmarked for his moral conduct); the mode of subjection (the way the individual establishes his relation to the rule and acknowledges his obligation to put it into practice); the ethical work (the practice of the self that transforms the self into the ethical subject of his conduct); and the *telos* (the self’s

roles or same sex intercourse) and a model of abstention (which promises access to the truth of one’s being or spiritual wisdom). Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, pp. 15-20.

<sup>93</sup> Foucault, “On the Genealogy of Ethics”, p. 342 and p. 361.

<sup>94</sup> Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, p. 21.

<sup>95</sup> Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, p. 24.

<sup>96</sup> Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, pp. 25-26.

<sup>97</sup> Foucault, “The Return of Morality”, p. 253.

## *A Critical History of Subjectivity and Ethico-Morality*

contingent integration of his moral actions into a pattern of conduct).<sup>98</sup> For Foucault, these modes of subjectivation, which are “more decisive for comprehending the transformations of moral experience than the history of codes”, are commensurate with ethics if it is “understood as the elaboration of a form of relation to self that enables an individual to fashion himself into a subject of ethical conduct”.<sup>99</sup>

An epoch’s mode of subjectivation might implore an ethical subject in either a quasi-juridical style, where conduct is referred to the moral code that has the status of the law or norm – the mode of subjectivation in the *scientia sexualis*, for example – or through practices of the self that are ascetic in form, and where conduct is a question of an appropriate relation to self.<sup>100</sup> In this respect, Foucault speaks of code-oriented and ethics-oriented moralities, respectively. Further, because histories of morality emphasise moral behaviour over the mode of subjectivation, he focuses on the latter. Ethics-oriented moralities offer a crucial field of historicity about the self’s recognition of himself as an ethical subject of his sexual conduct.<sup>101</sup> This is why Foucault’s critical history of the ethico-moral axis of experience, specifically the modes of subjectivation, is not a nietzschean genealogy of morals but “the genealogy of the subject as a subject of ethical actions”,<sup>102</sup> which necessarily incorporates a genealogy of ascetic practices of the self, too.<sup>103</sup>

Foucault’s conceptualisation of ethics, with its four modes of ontology, deontology, ascetics and teleology,<sup>104</sup> describes the work that one carries out on oneself as a free being.<sup>105</sup> The modes of subjectivation portray a self-employed practice.<sup>106</sup> They detail “a mode of being that could be defined by the full enjoyment of oneself, or the perfect supremacy of oneself over oneself”.<sup>107</sup> If the constitution of the self’s relation to himself captures the conceptual subtleties of an agonistic freedom which is grounded in a recalcitrant will that provokes its *vis-à-vis* of *pouvoir/savoir qua* limits of who we are, then it can be said that Foucault’s critical history promises a state of being autonomous in thought and action. Instead of

<sup>98</sup> Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, pp. 26-29.

<sup>99</sup> Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, p. 251.

<sup>100</sup> Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, p. 31.

<sup>101</sup> Foucault, “On the Genealogy of Ethics”, p. 352; Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, pp. 30-32.

<sup>102</sup> Foucault, “On the Genealogy of Ethics”, pp. 355-356.

<sup>103</sup> Foucault, “On the Genealogy of Ethics”, pp. 341-342 and p. 355.

<sup>104</sup> Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, p. 37.

<sup>105</sup> Toews, “Foucault and the Freudian Subject”, p. 131.

<sup>106</sup> Thacker, “Foucault and the Writing of History”, p. 38.

<sup>107</sup> Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, p. 31.

## *A Critical History of Subjectivity and Ethico-Morality*

kantian or hegelian self-awareness, the relation to self is the means to the end of “self-formation as an ‘ethical subject’”.<sup>108</sup> It is “the field of a liberty forming itself as a subjectivation”,<sup>109</sup> and this field in which ethical subjectivity is constituted is political because “we come to recognize ourselves as subjects of a form of experience ... [through concrete subjectivization,] which rests on a body of knowledge, norms, and models of our nature”.<sup>110</sup> A foucauldian ethics is a politics which, to borrow Foucault's use of a concept in an altogether different context, promises a *déassujettissement*,<sup>111</sup> a desubjectification from *assujettissement*,<sup>112</sup> the submission of subjectivity that is effected by *somato-* and *bio-pouvoir* and political rationality. Foucault's ethico-morality illuminates the exit to maturity that is blocked by humanism.

### **6.iv. The Confessions of the Flesh and a Hermeneutics of the Self**

Ethics-oriented moralities in greek and græco-roman antiquity problematise sex in terms of an æsthetics of existence.<sup>113</sup> The *telos* in each epoch—moderation in life or the conversion to self—requires the elaboration of moral conduct through ascetic practices of the self. In respect of asymmetrical relations to others they bring about the self's mastery of himself in his use of pleasures, and with regard to symmetrical relations to others the practices of the self lead to the self's care of himself in his practice of pleasures.<sup>114</sup> Citizens in antiquity, Foucault writes,

not only set themselves rules of conduct, but also seek to transform themselves, to change themselves in their singular being, and to make their life into an *oeuvre* that carries certain aesthetic values and meets certain stylistic criteria.<sup>115</sup>

With its practical stylisation of liberty, ethical subjectivity represents the frontier between antiquity's sexual ethics of pleasure and early christianity's code-oriented sexual morality. As the confessions of the flesh, the latter implores a quasi-juridical relation to other, the abbot, who oversees and mediates the self's hermeneutic relation to self and the constitution of his moral identity through

<sup>108</sup> Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, p. 28.

<sup>109</sup> Bernauer, “Michel Foucault's Ecstatic Thinking”, p. 66.

<sup>110</sup> Rajchman, *Michel Foucault*, p. 85.

<sup>111</sup> Foucault, “Par-delà le bien et le mal”, p. 227.

<sup>112</sup> Foucault, “Revolutionary Action”, p. 222.

<sup>113</sup> Foucault, “On the Genealogy of Ethics”, pp. 357-358.

<sup>114</sup> Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, p. 36.

<sup>115</sup> Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, pp. 10-11.

## *A Critical History of Subjectivity and Ethico-Morality*

practices and techniques of decipherment, confession, renunciation and spiritual combat.<sup>116</sup> There is what Foucault calls a restructuration of the mode of relation to self, as well as a transformation of the practices on which subjectivation is based.<sup>117</sup> Essentially, Plato's philosophy of erotics, which first demands that the self constitute himself as a subject of metaphysical truth, is taken to heart by scholastic philosophers. They discard antiquity's ethics-oriented morality, especially its notion of the self who stylises his subjectivity, in favour of a morality of renunciation and a hermeneutics of desire.<sup>118</sup> It commandeers the practices of the self and, on the basis of a philosophical subject, inaugurates the constitution of objective, normative and subjective experience. If what "was missing in classical antiquity was the problematization of the constitution of the self as a subject ... , [b]eginning with Christianity we have ... an appropriation of morality by the theory of the subject".<sup>119</sup>

Foucault argues that early christianity's *pastoral-pouvoir* exercises the relations of government between the social body and the self on the basis of a moral identity. It makes the self perpetually aware of, and alert to, his mental weaknesses and bodily temptations, and particularly his flesh, which is the subjectivity of the body. Early christianity's sexual morality of the confessions of the flesh "interiorises sexuality within subjectivity through the self's submission of himself, which is the first effect of the introduction into roman society of *pastoral-pouvoir*".<sup>120</sup>

Cassian, whose texts represent early christian literature in the græco-roman society of the second and third century, exemplifies the scholastic techniques for the interpretation of desire. They help the monk to constitute himself as a moral subject through the mortification of the flesh. For Foucault, Cassian's practices of monastic asceticism are vital to the battle for chastity because, apart from the vices of greed, avarice, wrath, sloth, accidie, vainglory and pride, they see the spirit of fornication as the greatest threat. As it is rooted in the body and mind, this spirit has an ontological prominence and, for those voluntary confinees to the cloister, it is the sole vice which can and must be completely mortified (in contrast to avarice, for example, as even the monk must eat).<sup>121</sup>

<sup>116</sup> Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, p. 63.

<sup>117</sup> Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, pp. 31-32.

<sup>118</sup> Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, p. 230.

<sup>119</sup> Foucault, "The Return of Morality", p. 253.

<sup>120</sup> "La chair, c'est la subjectivité même du corps, la chair chrétienne, c'est la sexualité prise à l'intérieur de cette subjectivité, de cet assujettissement de l'individu à lui-même qui est l'effet premier de l'introduction dans la société romaine du pouvoir pastoral". Foucault, "Sexualité et pouvoir", p. 566.

<sup>121</sup> Foucault, "The Battle for Chastity", pp. 228-229.

## *A Critical History of Subjectivity and Ethico-Morality*

The spirit of—or desire for—fornication has three elements: carnal conjunction; autoeroticism; and carnal images (of the mind and thoughts). Cassian ignores the first and focuses on the besiegement of the monk's will by an internal play of the last two, which fuel the spirit of fornication. The battle for chastity wages against the desire for autoeroticism and carnal images, what Cassian calls concupiscence, from which the will must dissociate and disinvolve itself. Through the ascetic but hermeneutic practices of confession and self-examination, the monk withdraws his will from concupiscence to reveal its hidden depths.<sup>122</sup> As a consequence of his triumphant battle against nocturnal pollution and erotic dreams, which become alien to the chastised soul, the monk who lives in his body but is released from the flesh attains his *telos*, or that form of citizenship that is otherwise reserved for saints.<sup>123</sup>

The techniques of examination and confession, which are first articulated by Foucault in *Discipline and Punish* and *The History of Sexuality*, find their earliest employment as producers of truth with Cassian and, later in the fourth and fifth century, with Gregory of Nyssa and Saint Augustine, too.<sup>124</sup> In Gregory's case, to accede to the care of the self is a question of the renunciation of marriage and an associated hermeneutic detachment of oneself from the flesh. Through the virginity of the heart and body, the privileged man with social status, who this ethico-moral thought is aimed at, can lay claim to his *telos*, immortality, if he becomes a monk.<sup>125</sup> But whereas in græco-roman antiquity the care of the self is a means to the end of the conversion to self, which the citizen attains ethically via practices of the self in order to then care for the city, with Gregory it implores a hermeneutic relation to self, in which the monk renounces the world and discovers the soul that God illuminates.<sup>126</sup>

Saint Augustine, whose account of sexual morality still informs the *scientia sexualis* and, by association, is the spur for Foucault's original project in 1976,<sup>127</sup> similarly meditates on the monk's attainment of truth as the passport for ascension to the paradise for saints and chaste, virgin souls.<sup>128</sup> For Saint Augustine, the assertion of the autonomy of the will by man is tantamount to the renunciation of

<sup>122</sup> Foucault, "The Battle for Chastity", pp. 233-239.

<sup>123</sup> Foucault, "The Battle for Chastity", pp. 230-231.

<sup>124</sup> Foucault, "The Battle for Chastity", p. 240.

<sup>125</sup> Foucault, "L'herméneutique du sujet", pp. 353-355.

<sup>126</sup> Foucault, "Les techniques de soi", p. 787.

<sup>127</sup> Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, p. 9.

<sup>128</sup> Foucault, "Les techniques de soi", p. 793.

## *A Critical History of Subjectivity and Ethico-Morality*

the grace of God, in virtue of whom the body is ontologically subordinate to the will. To regain his favour, the monk determines to care for himself, and the techniques of the self he turns to are designed to purge the monk of his carnal images. As for Cassian, they represent the principle of the movements of the sexual organs independently of the will<sup>129</sup>—the erection is the image of man's revolt against God<sup>130</sup>—and for Saint Augustine the soul only encounters the truth, whence paradise, if the monk confronts and subdues these carnal image, which as an integral part of the human will are responsible for his diremption from the divine.

To attain a state of being autonomous in thought and action from the flesh, the cassian, gregorian or augustinian monk cares for the self with a hermeneutics of his desire.<sup>131</sup> He practices the technique of examination, in which he interprets the desires he harbours, the thoughts he has and the state of his soul. It is an act of faith where the monk publicly reveals the truth about himself, which he discovers in his soul through self-examination. Albeit revealed as a sinner, the monk is also a penitent. He can divorce himself from his previous identity; for example, as that of an autoerotic sinner.<sup>132</sup> Secondly, there is the technique of confession, the verbal mobilisation of the soul, in which the monk recognises himself through the words of others via his obedience to the abbot and his contemplation of God. The monk relates his carnal images to the impurity of his soul, which requires a relation to other and the submission to the other's morality of who the self should be.<sup>133</sup>

Together, examination and confession invite the revelation of truth through a hermeneutics of desire. They promise salvation to the monk, who renounces himself in those cases where the truth he reveals fails to tally with the *connaissance* of the abbot. There is, in the abbot's government of the monk, a relation of power *a propos* of knowledge.<sup>134</sup> Finally, Cassian, Gregory and Saint Augustine tame

<sup>129</sup> Foucault, "Sexualité et solitude", pp. 174-175.

<sup>130</sup> Foucault, "Sexualité et solitude", p. 176.

<sup>131</sup> Foucault in no way claims to provide a definitive portrayal of the hermeneutics of the self that are at the heart of early christianity's techniques of examination and confession, because christianity is more interested in its beliefs than the practice of them; there is no actual christian doctrine on the hermeneutics of the self; a christian hermeneutics of the self is frequently criss-crossed by its theologies of the soul (concupiscence, sin and the loss of grace); and the subsequent diffusion of the christian hermeneutics of the self into broader culture makes it difficult to isolate and distinguish from a non-christian hermeneutics of the self. Foucault, "Les techniques de soi", p. 784.

<sup>132</sup> Foucault, "Les techniques de soi", pp. 805-808.

<sup>133</sup> Foucault, "Les techniques de soi", pp. 809-811.

<sup>134</sup> The practice of confession involves the monk's submission to dogmatic and canonical truths, in which he must both believe and demonstrate that he believes. In addition, christianity uses confession to produce the truth from within the monk, who must know who he is and constantly decipher and speak about everything that happens inside him. The monk's knowledge of himself is the precondition for the purification of the soul—revelation in return for salvation—hence Saint



## *A Critical History of Subjectivity and Ethico-Morality*

thought's irrational nature. If the experience of chastity is to be real, its enemy of concupiscence, which is harboured by thought, demands a hermeneutic technique for the examination and confession of the various masks which thought assumes.<sup>135</sup> In this chastity-oriented asceticism, Foucault claims,

one can see a process of 'subjectivization' ... linked with a process of self-knowledge which makes the obligation to seek and state the truth about oneself an indispensable and permanent condition of this asceticism; and if there is subjectivization, it also involves an indeterminate objectivization of the self by the self-indeterminate in the sense that one must be forever extending as far as possible the range of one's thoughts, however insignificant and innocent they may appear to be. Moreover, this subjectivization, in its quest for the truth about oneself, functions through complex relations with others, ... . One has to rid oneself of the power of the Other, ... and eternal warfare has to be waged against this Other, ... . Finally, confession to others, submission to their advice and permanent obedience to one's superiors is essential in this battle.<sup>136</sup>

In spite of the archaeological continuity in ethico-moral thought of the care of oneself between græco-roman antiquity and early christianity, genealogy reveals how the practices of the self through which it is realised are substantially reformulated. Truth-telling, for instance, which involves the citizen's confession to his interlocutor of the truth about himself and what he believes to be true about the world,<sup>137</sup> is in early christianity a technique for the monk's self-interpretation and discovery of concupiscent tendencies.<sup>138</sup> Græco-roman antiquity's ethic to care for oneself, which requires a knowledge of the self,<sup>139</sup> is marginalised by verbal techniques of confession, which on the principle of know thyself operate through a hermeneutics of desire.<sup>140</sup> Antiquity's aesthetics of existence, in which the citizen's practices of the self constitute his ethical subjectivity, is replaced in early christianity by the renunciation of the self and the decipherment of truth, which results in a moral identity.<sup>141</sup> From early christianity, truth is that which the monk mints, banks and dispenses in his relation to self that is mediated by the abbot, who withdraws and spends the currency of truth at the monk's expense. "Unconditional obedience, continuous examination and exhaustive confession", Foucault

Augustine's motto, *quis facit veritatem*, construct the truth in oneself to access the light (*faire la vérité en soi, avoir accès à la lumière*). Foucault, "Les techniques de soi", pp. 804-805.

<sup>135</sup> Foucault, "The Battle for Chastity", p. 239.

<sup>136</sup> Foucault, "The Battle for Chastity", p. 240.

<sup>137</sup> Flynn, "Foucault as Parrhesiast", pp. 103-105.

<sup>138</sup> Foucault, "Interview de Michel Foucault", pp. 658-659.

<sup>139</sup> Foucault, "Les techniques de soi", pp. 788-789.

<sup>140</sup> Foucault, "Les techniques de soi", p. 813.

<sup>141</sup> Foucault, "On the Genealogy of Ethics", p. 366.

concludes,

comprise an apparatus in which each element is inextricable from the others. The verbalisation of truth from the depths of the self is indispensable to the government of one man by another ... . But it must be emphasised that the purpose of the manifestation of truth is not the self's sovereign mastery of himself. Instead, the expected aim is humility and mortification, or the detachment of the self from himself and the constitution of a disciplined relation to self, which tends to destroy the form of the self.<sup>142</sup>

#### 6.v. The Use of Pleasure and Ethico-Political Subjectivity

Foucault proposes a threefold justification of his critical history of subjectivity: historically, "the idea of a morality as obedience to a code of rules is now disappearing";<sup>143</sup> morally, the "search for a form of morality acceptable to everybody in the sense that everyone should submit to it, strikes me as catastrophic";<sup>144</sup> and ethically, as "a moral experience essentially centered on the subject no longer seems satisfactory to me today".<sup>145</sup> For these reasons, Foucault's conception of maturity that is apposite to the finitude articulated by his three critiques cannot draw on the autonomous subject's self-actualised recognition, which defines the philosophical subject whose moral identity is constituted by a hermeneutic relation to self in early and mediæval christianity's sexual moralities of the confessions of the flesh and the sacrament of penance. On behalf of a post-humanist, enlightenment paradigm for freedom, critical historical critique investigates the constitution of ethical subjectivity as a practice of the self in antiquity.

Of course, Foucault is neither philosophically nor politically naive enough to want to re-instate antiquity's sexual ethics, for "you can't find the solution of a problem in the solution of another problem raised at another moment by other people".<sup>146</sup> Moreover,

<sup>142</sup> "L'obéissance inconditionnée, l'examen ininterrompu et l'aveu exhaustif forment donc un ensemble dont chaque élément implique les deux autres; la manifestation verbale de la vérité qui se cache au fond de soi-même apparaît comme une pièce indispensable au gouvernement des hommes les uns par les autres ... . Mais il faut souligner que cette manifestation n'a pas pour fin d'établir la maîtrise souveraine de soi sur soi; ce qu'on en attend, au contraire, c'est l'humilité et la mortification, le détachement à l'égard de soi et la constitution d'un rapport à soi qui tend à la destruction de la forme du soi". Foucault, "Du gouvernement des vivants", p. 129.

<sup>143</sup> Foucault, "An Aesthetics of Existence", p. 49.

<sup>144</sup> Foucault, "The Return of Morality", p. 254.

<sup>145</sup> Foucault, "The Return of Morality", p. 253.

<sup>146</sup> Foucault, "On the Genealogy of Ethics", p. 343.

## *A Critical History of Subjectivity and Ethico-Morality*

[t]he Greek ethics of pleasure is linked to a virile society, to dissymmetry, exclusion of the other, an obsession with penetration, and a kind of threat of being dispossessed of your own energy, and so on. All that is quite disgusting!<sup>147</sup>

Instead of its sexual ethics, a critical history of antiquity finds its vindication in the constitution of ethical subjectivity as “practices of liberation, of liberty”.<sup>148</sup> Through his lectures at the *Collège de France* for 1980-1981, *Subjectivité et Verité*, Foucault lauds how the self establishes, maintains and transforms his subjectivity in accordance with numerous goals, and via a relation of mastery of the self over, and a knowledge of the self by, the self. In the interests of an agonistic freedom applicable to the present, Foucault situates a hermeneutic self-interrogation about truth and:

the imperative ‘to know thyself’ ... within a broader interrogation ... : how does the self ‘govern himself’ by exercising actions in which he is the object of those actions, the domain in which they are applied, the instrument to which they have recourse and the self who reacts?<sup>149</sup>

My aim in this section and the next is to specify the self-government of oneself with respect to antiquity’s problematisation of sex in terms of a sexual ethic, which is self-actualised by practices of the ethico-political and ethico-social self. As an example of the agonistic relation to self, I look in this section at the art of life of economics, and to articulate the birth of a theory of the subject, in which sex is posited as integral to the truth of the subject’s being in greek antiquity (a theme that subsequently finds support in Saint Augustine and humanism), I also examine the art of life of erotics. Then, to highlight the graceful, symmetrical relation to other in græco-roman antiquity, I concentrate in the following section on the art of the self of economics.

Xenophon, Plato and Aristotle problematise the *aphrodisia*, the uncensored, loosely defined pleasures which include those that effect delight and are associated with art and music, as well as the self-indulgent pleasures (*akolasia aphrodisia*) that are linked to food, drink and sex and are experienced at great cost to the body.<sup>150</sup> In particular, self-indulgent pleasures are earmarked as the citizen’s ethical substance,

<sup>147</sup> Foucault, “On the Genealogy of Ethics”, p. 346.

<sup>148</sup> Foucault, “An Aesthetics of Existence”, p. 50.

<sup>149</sup> “[I]l s’agit de replacer l’impératif du ‘se connaître soi-même’, ... dans l’interrogation plus vaste: comment ‘se gouverner’ en exerçant des actions où on est soi-même l’objectif de ces actions, le domaine où elles s’appliquent, l’instrument auquel elles ont recours et le sujet qui agit”? Foucault, “Subjectivité et vérité”, p. 213.

<sup>150</sup> Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, pp. 32-40.

## *A Critical History of Subjectivity and Ethico-Morality*

as the base necessities of food, drink and procreation induce an essential appetite that gives rise to an intense desire for them. Pleasure in greek antiquity is conceived to originate in a force that threatens to extend the citizen's needs beyond nature's prescriptions and to reverse the hierarchy of the soul over the body, which is a core prerequisite for the citizen's government of the *polis*. For doctors and philosophers, Foucault writes, the moral problematization of food, drink and sexual relations with women and boys constitutes the same ethical material.

[T]hey brought forces into play that were natural, but that always tended to be excessive; and they all raised the same question: how could he, how must he 'make use' (*chréatai*) of this dynamics of pleasure, desires, and acts? A question of right use.<sup>151</sup>

The ethical substance of pleasure gives rise to a mode of subjection in which the citizen focuses on its use. He moderates and regulates his practice of sex through a stylisation of his conduct according to need, timeliness and status, and in regard to principles of prudence and practical reason. In place of laws of desire or norms, which regulate the juridical subject, the citizen's ethical conduct individualises his action, which is the qualification for acknowledgement by his peers in the *polis*.<sup>152</sup> To this end, the mode of subjection invites daily ethical work, in which the citizen gives shape to a certain attitude to himself, whilst a *telos* of moderation orients him. Where the ethical work is concerned, practices of the self elaborated in respect of his regimen, household and courtship develop the citizen's ethical virtue of the mastery of himself (*enkrateia*), which is simultaneously a means to the end of the political virtues of wisdom, courage, justice and, most relevant to Foucault's investigation, the moderation (*sóphrosyné*) that the citizen exercises in his government of others. To develop his self-mastery, the citizen practices a combative attitude against his pleasures, which involves an incessant battle for control of the agonistic relation that is inherent between the pull of the pleasures and the demand to use them moderately. In addition, the citizen develops a polemical attitude that concerns an agonistic relation with and between himself. Here, the battle is not between the opposing forces of pleasure and its ethical use, nor of the soul against the body, but against an adversary – himself – who is not ontologically alien to the citizen.

These agonistic games of ethical conflict result in victory if, as Aristotle advises, the citizen controls his pleasure and desire through moderation, or if it is

<sup>151</sup> Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, pp. 51-52.

<sup>152</sup> Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, pp. 55-62.

## *A Critical History of Subjectivity and Ethico-Morality*

evident that he has established a solid and stable rule of himself by himself.<sup>153</sup> Virtue in greek antiquity's sexual ethics is manifest as the citizen's mastery-docility relationship to pleasure and as domination-submission in his relationship to himself. Together, Foucault calls them the *heautocratic* structure of the self. It is the citizen's literal self-government of himself, his care of himself, and it contrasts with early christianity's government of the monk by the other on the basis of his relationship of elucidation-renunciation of the flesh, and decipherment-purification of desire and concupiscence.

To sustain his *heautocratic* structure, the citizen undertakes daily ethical practices of the self, which mirror the form of the political practices of the self. Yet, even if they produce the different virtues of self-mastery and moderation, they are interconnected because the citizen's ethical care of himself is the condition for his political care of others, whether it be in respect of his wife and slaves in the household, or over those in the *polis*.<sup>154</sup> The virile character of self-mastery signals the citizen's ethical attitude and manly conduct in the use of the pleasures, which is isomorphic with his political role where, in the exercise of power, the citizen displays the coterminous manly virtue of moderation in his rule of others.<sup>155</sup> This ethico-political freedom of individuals, Foucault says,

understood as the mastery they were capable of exercising over themselves, was indispensable to the entire state. ... The individual's attitude toward himself, the way in which he ensured his own freedom with regard to himself, and the form of supremacy he maintained over himself were a contributing element to the well-being and good order of the city.<sup>156</sup>

Greek antiquity's mode of subjectivation is inextricable from politics, and to constitute his ethico-political subjectivity the citizen defers to truth (*logos*). However, the self's relation to truth "is not an epistemological condition enabling the individual to recognize himself in his singularity as a desiring subject", but the structural, instrumental and ontological condition for the self's practice of liberty, in which the citizen seeks an ethical *qua* moderate use of pleasure.<sup>157</sup> Firstly, truth aids the practice of self-mastery necessary to structure pleasure and desire; secondly, truth supports the *heautocratic* structure of the self and, as the instrument that guarantees the citizen's dominance of his pleasures, it releases him for the more

<sup>153</sup> Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, pp. 63-71.

<sup>154</sup> Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, pp. 71-76.

<sup>155</sup> Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, pp. 82-86.

<sup>156</sup> Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, p. 79.

<sup>157</sup> Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, p. 89.

## *A Critical History of Subjectivity and Ethico-Morality*

temporal duties of citizenship; and, thirdly, truth produces the citizen's ontological recognition of a relationship to himself—he constitutes himself as a subject of a socratic knowledge of himself.<sup>158</sup> For the ethico-political self, truth enables status, status is a man who is ethical, the ethical man is accepted and recognised as a citizen, and only the citizen exercises power. In this unique relation of independence between truth and power, which are connected by the citizen's subjectivity, freedom is politically exclusive, albeit an ethical practice. It is then the practice of liberty in Greek antiquity, and not its political practices, that Foucault retrieves as a model for maturity in the present. "Putting it schematically", he writes,

classical antiquity's moral reflection concerning the pleasures was not directed toward a codification of acts, nor toward a hermeneutics of the subject, but toward a stylization of attitudes and an aesthetics of existence. ... [S]exual moderation was an exercise of freedom that took form in self-mastery; and the latter was shown in the manner in which the subject behaved, in the self-restraint he displayed in his virile activity, in the way he related to himself in the relationship he had with others. ... A moral value that was also an aesthetic value and a truth value ... by aiming at the satisfaction of real needs, by respecting the true hierarchy of the human being, and by never forgetting where one stood in regard to truth.<sup>159</sup>

It is in the arts of life of economics and erotics that an ethico-political isomorphism is most evident. In respect of the former, the husband's endeavour to voluntarily reciprocate the wife's enforced sexual fidelity, despite his licence to the contrary, constitutes one of the most elegant forms of the citizen's moderation and "pertain[s] to an art of governing—governing in general, governing oneself, and governing a wife who must be kept under control and respected at the same time".<sup>160</sup> To be sure, economics does not promote what Foucault calls a double sexual monopoly. There is no emphasis on heterosexual sex and its localisation in marriage for both spouses. Instead of a personal commitment to his wife, the citizen's limitation of the use of his pleasures to marriage, which brings about an ethically ordered household *a propos* of a deliberate practice of the self-limitation of his power, is a political imperative of the *polis*, whilst his moderation is a sign of an ability to distribute justice in it. The effect of his virtue of moderation is the citizen's renunciation of extramarital sex—*de jure* for his wife—yet what it represents in the art of life of economics is his ethical stylisation of conduct, his self-mastery of

<sup>158</sup> Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, pp. 82-89.

<sup>159</sup> Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, pp. 92-93.

<sup>160</sup> Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, pp. 164-165.

## *A Critical History of Subjectivity and Ethico-Morality*

pleasure and moderate government of his wife.<sup>161</sup>

At its core, the art of life of erotics concerns the type of ethical stylisation to practice in the love of a boy, which differs to that practiced in the love of a woman within the art of economics just discussed.<sup>162</sup> In pre-socratic erotics, it is “a problem of knowing how one can make allowance for the other’s freedom in the mastery one exercises over oneself and in the true love one bears for him”.<sup>163</sup> The problematisation is directed at the boy, whose courtship by a citizen is a training ground in ethical conduct and virtue.<sup>164</sup> At stake is the boy’s future reputation as a citizen, which is gauged in terms of his honour. As a minimum, the boy avoids a feeling of shame and the contempt of others that accompanies those who yield at random and indiscriminately; in parallel, the boy wins honour if, during his adolescence when he is most desirable, he exhibits a certain bodily demeanour or quality of acquaintance, and is discerning in the management of the suitors vying for his charms. Here, self-mastery is displayed by an ability to neither frustrate all their advances, nor to concede to every proposition, whilst the boy’s moderation is evident in his practice and timing of his use for pleasure by the citizen. Both moments demonstrate the boy’s attitude of an ethical relationship with himself, which is a passport to citizenship.<sup>165</sup>

Nevertheless, the courtship of a boy by a citizen, in particular their nocturnal congress, presents an implacable problem. In an active-dominant and passive-dominated ethical schema, which is based on a sexual model of penetration, relations between the citizen and his wife are philosophically unproblematic. But when it comes to the question of the courtship of a boy, and the eventuality that he would, as a virile citizen of tomorrow, be today’s passive, dominated subject of penetration, there arises what Foucault calls the antinomy of the boy,<sup>166</sup> for the relationship he “was expected to establish with himself in order to become a free man, master of himself and capable of prevailing over others, was at variance with a form of relationship in which he would be an object of pleasure for another”.<sup>167</sup>

The *anti nomos* of the boy, the flouting of customs which conform to nature,<sup>168</sup> ultimately sees the colonisation of pre-socratic greek antiquity’s modes of

<sup>161</sup> Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, p. 184.

<sup>162</sup> Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, p. 190.

<sup>163</sup> Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, p. 253.

<sup>164</sup> Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, pp. 193-203.

<sup>165</sup> Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, pp. 204-211.

<sup>166</sup> Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, pp. 214-220.

<sup>167</sup> Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, pp. 221.

<sup>168</sup> Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, pp. 158.

## *A Critical History of Subjectivity and Ethico-Morality*

subjectivation, in which “‘courtship’ practice and recognition of the other’s freedom” are central to erotics, by “an ascesis of the subject and the common access to truth”.<sup>169</sup> For Foucault, the coloniser is Plato’s post-socratic discourse of philosophical erotics, which reformulates the practices central to the constitution of ethical subjectivity: amorous behaviour becomes an inquiry into the nature of true love; the boy’s honour becomes a question of the love of truth; in place of a dissymmetry between partners, there is a convergence of love *qua* road to truth; and virtue is transferred from the loved boy to the citizen’s love, which offers a direct relation to wisdom.<sup>170</sup> In philosophical erotics, the citizen masters his desire for pleasure with the boy, which he knows is ephemeral and a hindrance to the true love of wisdom. Through active self-mastery and an ability to practice moderation in his pleasures, the citizen’s existent relation to truth becomes the object of love for the boy. Plato makes love into an ontological question, and philosophical erotics into a true discourse on the relationship between love and truth and the ascetics necessary to attain wisdom.<sup>171</sup> The concern is with the truth the citizen is capable of in the double sense of his soul’s (grammatically feminine) “relation to her own desire questioned in its being, and a relation to the object of her desire [the boy] recognized as a true being”.<sup>172</sup> With Plato, sex is first problematised on the basis of desire, which entails a moral requirement to be a subject of the truth that lies behind the objects of desire in the world of ideas. In a way that may be surprising at first, Foucault reflects,

one sees the formation, in Greek culture and in connection with the love of boys, of some of the major elements of a sexual ethics that will renounce that love by appealing to the above principle [of indefinite abstention]: the requirement of a symmetry and reciprocity in the love relationship; the necessity of a long and arduous struggle with oneself; the gradual purification of a love that is addressed only to being *per se*, in its truth; and man’s inquiry into himself as a subject of desire.<sup>173</sup>

### **6.vi. The Care of the Self and Ethico-Social Subjectivity**

Antiquity, Foucault jests, is a profound error that founders on the contradiction between “the relentless search for a certain style of existence ... and the effort to

<sup>169</sup> Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, p. 244.

<sup>170</sup> Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, pp. 236-241.

<sup>171</sup> Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, pp. 235-242.

<sup>172</sup> Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, p. 244.

<sup>173</sup> Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, p. 245.



## *A Critical History of Subjectivity and Ethico-Morality*

make it available to all".<sup>174</sup> For this to occur, a religious framework is required which is akin to that established after græco-roman antiquity by early christianity's *pastoral-pouvoir*,<sup>175</sup> when Saint Augustine's doctrinal unification of the elements dispersed across the arts of life allows *pastoral-pouvoir* to adjudicate the game of death and immortality, the institution of marriage, and the conditions of access to truth. The nascent *pastoral-pouvoir* between the monk and the abbot recentres antiquity's practices of the self around the decipherment of the self, purification procedures and struggles against concupiscence. Instead of "pleasure and the aesthetics of its use,... [there is] desire and its purifying hermeneutics".<sup>176</sup> In this sense, Plato's philosophical erotics is a sign "for a future inquiry into desiring man", as well as an omen for a sexual ethics of the right use of pleasure that cannot readily accommodate an ascetics, in which total abstention is the preferred standard and privilege is accorded to the question of desire.<sup>177</sup>

From the point of view of maturity that extends beyond the ethico-morality of the athenian citizen's exercise of his freedom, his virile power and his access to truth,<sup>178</sup> Foucault does not lament the decline in the sexual ethic of the use of pleasure, so much as the ethico-political subjectivity of an aesthetics of existence, or "the purposeful art of a freedom perceived as a power game".<sup>179</sup> In critical history, there is no nostalgia for an original, pre-christian system of thought, as for Hegel and Nietzsche, only a return to an ethico-morality in which we recognise ourselves today.<sup>180</sup> Of course, at the level of subjectivity Foucault re-iterates the distinction between pre- and post-socratic (greek) antiquity that is made by Nietzsche, who articulates the death of tragedy due to the interventions of Socrates' theoretical man,<sup>181</sup> and Heidegger, who describes the platonic birth of onto-theology or metaphysics.<sup>182</sup> Yet Foucault's focus on problematisations, both the discursive and

<sup>174</sup> Foucault, "The Return of Morality", p. 244.

<sup>175</sup> Foucault, "The Return of Morality", p. 246.

<sup>176</sup> Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, p. 254.

<sup>177</sup> Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, p. 244 and p. 246.

<sup>178</sup> Foucault, "On the Genealogy of Ethics", p. 344.

<sup>179</sup> Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, p. 253.

<sup>180</sup> Foucault, "The Return of Morality", pp. 248-249.

<sup>181</sup> According to Nietzsche, the greatness of pre-socratic tragedy resides in its amalgamation of appollonian restraint and control with dionysian passion and irrationality. It is dealt a deathblow by the interventions of theoretical man, whose progenitor, Socrates, believes that knowledge and reason not only lead to the depths of being but modify it, too. For Nietzsche, the optimism at the heart of all those socratic cultures which are unable to free themselves from the Greeks and the truth they covert is the delusion of limitless power. Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, §§ 15-18, pp. 51-67.

<sup>182</sup> Heidegger alludes to Plato's inauguration of freedom as an education towards a metaphysical truth. It is indicated by the allegory of the cave, where the apprehension of a thing is antecedent to

## *A Critical History of Subjectivity and Ethico-Morality*

non-discursive, salvages some, and abandons other, aspects of ancient experience.<sup>183</sup> In his focus on græco-roman antiquity of the first and second century, therefore, Foucault highlights the continuation of an ethics-oriented morality that is based on a sexual ethic of the care of oneself. He distinguishes the transformation of dietetics, economics and erotics from arts of life in greek antiquity into arts of the self. In græco-roman antiquity an aesthetics of existence is finessed into a universal mode of social being, which entails practices that are constitutive of ethico-social subjectivity.

Foucault commences with an analysis of Artemidorus' treatise on oneirocriticism, the aptly entitled *The Interpretation of Dreams*, which encapsulates the aesthetics of existence operative in græco-roman antiquity. Artemidorus proposes the interpretation of dreams as an acceptable technique of the self for the citizen with a family, a few slaves and a small piece of land.<sup>184</sup> With allegorical event dreams established as the amateur hermeneutist's object of oneirocriticism, Artemidorus' guidelines for the citizen's practice of true interpretations distinguishes sex that conforms to the law, is contrary to the law, or contrary to nature.<sup>185</sup> In tandem, Artemidorus advises the citizen that although the dreamer is always present in his dream as a witness of his use of pleasure, it does not represent reality. Rather, dreams are predictive of the citizen's destiny in society. The interpreter looks for the link between himself *qua* subject of the dream and the subject of sex in the dream, and whether he is penetrater or penetrated, active or passive, or the subject or object of pleasure.<sup>186</sup> For Foucault, Artemidorus' technique of interpretation elucidates the isomorphism between the citizen's sexual ethics and social conduct.

The guiding thread of Artemidorus' interpretation ... implies the breaking down and ordering of ... [sexual] dreams ... that are, by nature, social elements, and ... it indicates a certain way of qualifying sexual acts in terms of the manner in which the dreaming subject maintains, as the subject of the dreamed-of act, his position as a social subject. ... The sexual dream uses the little drama of penetration and passivity, pleasure and expenditure, to tell the subject's

experience, and referred to the Idea *qua* that which shines and brings a thing into presence. *A propos* of Plato, Heidegger says, truth is beyond the things of experience and in a correctness of view about their thing-ness, or the extent to which a thing conforms to the Idea about it. Heidegger, "Plato's Doctrine of Truth", pp. 167-174.

<sup>183</sup> Foucault, "The Return of Morality", p. 249.

<sup>184</sup> Foucault, *The Care of the Self*, pp. 4-9.

<sup>185</sup> Foucault, *The Care of the Self*, pp. 17-25.

<sup>186</sup> Foucault, *The Care of the Self*, pp. 27-32.

## *A Critical History of Subjectivity and Ethico-Morality*

mode of being, as destiny has arranged it.<sup>187</sup>

Artemidorus, Foucault suggests, testifies to the perennality of greek antiquity's æsthetic experience of the pleasures.<sup>188</sup> Nonetheless, even if the ethical subjectivation of the athenian is mirrored in Rome, there is not a superimposition of the sexual ethic of the use of pleasure upon its citizens. Firstly, greek antiquity's *telos* of moderation is re-articulated as a conversion to self (*epistrophé eis heauton/conversio ad se*).<sup>189</sup> Secondly, if in Athens the means to moderation is self-mastery, which is dissymmetrical and non-reciprocal *vis-à-vis* the others who the citizen governs, in Rome self-mastery is a qualification for a rational being who is related to other similarly rational beings.<sup>190</sup> Roman self-mastery fashions the cultivation of the self (*cura sui*), and each day the citizen has to set aside time for introspection and reading, for the care of his body and meditation, or for speaking and writing with a confidant. Thirdly, the cultivation of the self is a consequence of a mode of subjection in which medico-philosophical reflection views the body as prone to passiveness and illness. Its vulnerability means it is no longer a question of the use of pleasure, but of the legitimate location and practice of pleasure (*akolasia dikaia*).<sup>191</sup> The cultivation of the self is a social practice with institutional structures, and the citizen's family and friends are tied into obligations of exchange and reciprocity in pursuit of it. Fourthly, there are three main practices of self-knowledge for a cultivation of the self: self-testing procedures ascertain how far the citizen has progressed and still has to travel before the conversion to self; self-examination, in which the self is both judge and defendant in his examination for the rationality behind ethical conduct; and, finally, the citizen attains a stoical self-knowledge by examining, monitoring and screening representations, which foster the citizen's relation to himself that is based on rational thought.<sup>192</sup>

Because it depends on these and other practices rather than a hermeneutics of the self, Foucault calls the conversion to self the culmination of a golden age of the ethical stylisation of subjectivity.<sup>193</sup> A roman citizen stresses the relation of himself

<sup>187</sup> Foucault, *The Care of the Self*, p. 33.

<sup>188</sup> Foucault, *The Care of the Self*, pp. 34-36 and p. 3.

<sup>189</sup> For Epictetus, the citizen is destined to care for himself because of his potential to make free use of the reason at the core of his being, whilst for Seneca the citizen's being demands a permanent exercise in self-transformation through philosophical education. Foucault, *The Care of the Self*, pp. 39-50.

<sup>190</sup> Foucault, "On the Genealogy of Ethics", pp. 357-358.

<sup>191</sup> Foucault, *The Care of the Self*, pp. 51-57.

<sup>192</sup> Foucault, *The Care of the Self*, pp. 58-65.

<sup>193</sup> Foucault, *The Care of the Self*, p. 45.

## *A Critical History of Subjectivity and Ethico-Morality*

to himself less in terms of an agonistic self-mastery than a juridical model of possession, whereby the self retreats from preoccupations with the external world to rationally focus on—rather than, via the abbot's mediation, to renounce—himself. Between greek and græco-roman antiquity, there is a transformation in sexual ethics from the use of pleasure to the care of the self. Unlike Hegel, whose philosophy of history suggests *Sittlichkeit* has no room to breathe under the empire of the ceasars, in which *Geist's* manifestation as right ignores the extra-juridical life of the citizen, Foucault's critical history provides evidence to the contrary of a link between political activity and ethico-social subjectivity. With Marcus Aurelius, Foucault writes, "one finds the clearest formulation of an experience of political power that ... takes the form of an occupation separate from status ... [but which] requires the careful practice of personal virtues".<sup>194</sup> The transformation in ethical life—the intensification of the citizen's relation to himself through the rational cultivation of himself in order to convert to himself—testifies to a crisis in subjectivation,

that is, ... [to] a difficulty in the manner in which the individual could form himself as the ethical subject of his actions, and efforts to find in devotion to self that which could enable him to submit to rules and give a purpose to his existence.<sup>195</sup>

Rather than a consequence of the transformations in græco-roman antiquity's ethics of married and political life, the crisis in subjectivation is an original response to them.<sup>196</sup> The re-articulated relation to self is a solution to the more widespread social practice, morally re-organised and public institution of marriage,<sup>197</sup> while political changes redefine the citizen's duties, obligations and roles.<sup>198</sup> In græco-

<sup>194</sup> Foucault, *The Care of the Self*, p. 89.

<sup>195</sup> Foucault, *The Care of the Self*, p. 95.

<sup>196</sup> Foucault, *The Care of the Self*, pp. 68-71.

<sup>197</sup> Foucault, *The Care of the Self*, pp. 72-80.

<sup>198</sup> Less a sign of individualism due to the decline of aristocratic rule, or the anonymity of græco-roman imperialism, Foucault claims that the cultivation of a rational relation to self is a philosophical reply to a political landscape that is flexible and requires alliances and local municipalities to be effective. As a result, a complex administration is needed, which is drawn from a service aristobureaucracy who require a personal ethics, as it is difficult to define the relations between what one is, what one can do, and what one is expected to accomplish. An ethico-social subjectivity is thus a response to the politics of imperialism and it is necessary for political office, which this new dualism in subjectivity reflects. Firstly, there is the relativisation of the exercise of power. Politics is no longer an aristocratic pastime, but a life and practice that requires judgement and reason. Secondly, virtue is an insufficient qualification for political office, and it must be supplemented with reason, which is demonstrated by the cultivation of the self. Thirdly, the precariousness of *fortuna* in politics demands a limitation of the empire on external events, which resembles the ethical conversion to self, where the stoical citizen finds delight in himself and the non-dependent relation of himself with himself. For

## *A Critical History of Subjectivity and Ethico-Morality*

roman antiquity, the practice of the ethical conduct required for the conversion to self takes place as arts of the self in respect of the body, wife and boys. But unlike greek antiquity, where it is a question of the moderate use of pleasure through self-mastery, the accentuated sexual ethic of the care of oneself is effected by the citizen's cultivation of his relation to himself, which involves the legitimate use of pleasure. Hence,

[t]he individual who has finally succeeded in gaining access to himself is, for himself, an object of pleasure ... [which] is defined by the fact of not being caused by anything that is independent of ourselves and therefore escapes our control. It arises out of ourselves and within ourselves. ... [I]t knows neither degree nor change ... and once given no external event can rend it. ... [A]ccess to self is capable of providing a form of pleasure that comes, in serenity and without fail, of the experience of oneself.<sup>199</sup>

Insofar as the conversion to self through the art of economics is concerned, Foucault detects three changes in the ethico-social life of matrimony. For the stoics in græco-roman antiquity, marriage is "a relation that is *dual* in its form, *universal* in its value, and *specific* in its intensity and strength".<sup>200</sup> Its primary function is social, which reflects the rational principle that links sex between a husband and wife with communal union, common progeny and social companionship.<sup>201</sup> Secondly, duties of reciprocity prevail over the husband's command of his wife.<sup>202</sup> The citizen's conversion to self is demonstrated by his ability to practice obligations to, and respect for, his wife. An art of dialogue effects the recognition of one another's activities, whilst an art of collaboration realises marriage as an ethical unity of two spouses, each with divergent aptitudes, but who are equally capable of virtue.<sup>203</sup> Thirdly, marriage is a symmetrical relationship that encroaches beyond the man's use of pleasure into issues of love, affection and mutual sympathy.

Marriage in græco-roman antiquity mirrors the rationality of the natural world—heterosexuality—while the ethical reciprocity between spouses leads to the conjugalisation of sex by marriage.<sup>204</sup> There is an intra-conjugal austerity that reconciles *Eros'* physical but non-reciprocal pleasure, which is traditionally

Foucault, there is an underlying principle of human reason manifest from the citizen's ethico-social subjectivity to the governmentality of the empire. Foucault, *The Care of the Self*, pp. 81-94.

<sup>199</sup> Foucault, *The Care of the Self*, p. 66.

<sup>200</sup> Foucault, *The Care of the Self*, p. 150.

<sup>201</sup> Foucault, *The Care of the Self*, pp. 151-156.

<sup>202</sup> Foucault, *The Care of the Self*, p. 163.

<sup>203</sup> Foucault, *The Care of the Self*, pp. 157-162.

<sup>204</sup> Foucault, *The Care of the Self*, pp. 165-173.

## *A Critical History of Subjectivity and Ethico-Morality*

reserved for pæderasty, with *Aphrodite's* amorous reciprocity of passion. As procreation rather than pleasure is the goal of marital sex, *Aphrodité* not only conjoins the husband and wife in intercourse, but she also enhances their friendship, feeling of longing, association and intimacy.<sup>205</sup> Essentially, marital sex fosters the spouses' symmetrical ethical relation and reciprocal affective relation. In parallel, the citizen honours himself as a rational being to the extent that he conforms to his objective of the legitimate use of his pleasure with his wife. For Foucault, marriage and its associated stylisation of ethico-social subjectivity is indicative of a lawless universality of an aesthetics of existence.<sup>206</sup>

The double sexual monopoly of marriage in græco-roman antiquity has a direct bearing on the citizen's art of erotic courtship of boys. Heterosexual marital fidelity leads to a philosophical disinvestment from, instead of a disqualification of, pæderasty, which is criticised for its "radical inadequacy, for its inability to accommodate relations of pleasure[,] ... a style of living, an aesthetics of behaviour, and a whole modality of relation to oneself, to others, and to truth".<sup>207</sup> In addition, pæderasty is deproblematised due to new parental rights and laws that oversee the boy, and the institutionalisation of pedagogy that negates the citizen's role as mentor. Ultimately, though, the courtship of boys, which is the pre-eminent athenian art for the constitution of ethico-political subjectivity, loses out to the roman valorisation of marriage as the primary art in the constitution of ethico-social subjectivity. For this to happen, the non-reciprocity of *Eros*, which is at the centre of the ethical asymmetry of pæderasty, has not only to be accommodated within the conjugal tie of ethical symmetry, but so too must *Aphrodite's* incitement of an amorous, reciprocal passion between husband and wife.

In this respect, Foucault refers to the dialogues of Plutarch and Pseudo-Lucian, who illuminate this paradox of pleasure which permits the legitimacy of pæderasty to continue simultaneous to its decline as a stylistics of existence. They reconceive *Eros* in order to include, within the art of erotics, both the pleasure of boys and of the opposite sex, before they allude to the inability of the former to sustain symmetry and reciprocity.<sup>208</sup> For Plutarch, true love that is a harmonious mix of *Eros* and *Aphrodite* is absent in the practice of pæderasty. The crucial ethical relation, which links the pleasure of *Eros* with the multiple effects of value of *Aphrodite*, is missing, by which Plutarch means the citizen's graciousness (*charis*) to

<sup>205</sup> Foucault, *The Care of the Self*, pp. 177-181.

<sup>206</sup> Foucault, *The Care of the Self*, p. 185.

<sup>207</sup> Foucault, *The Care of the Self*, p. 192.

<sup>208</sup> Foucault, *The Care of the Self*, pp. 193-213.

his wife. It produces the bond of friendship, such that the woman acquiesces as the passive object in pleasure because a reciprocal love enables her to want to.<sup>209</sup> Similarly, Pseudo-Lucian recommends marriage on the basis of the ethical virtue of a gracious reciprocity, which simulates the pæderastic virtue of friendship but without compromising the natural desire for pleasure.<sup>210</sup> Pseudo-Lucian superimposes the ethical privilege of pæderasty onto a universal form of marriage, which is a demiurgic duty for all except the philosopher.<sup>211</sup> Ultimately, Foucault says,

this erotics ... excludes the love of boys, for it lacks *charis*. ... [A] new stylistics of love... [is] formed... [that] is monistic in that it excludes the *aphrodisia*, but it makes this inclusion a criterion allowing it to keep only conjugal love and to exclude relations with boys because of the deficiency that characterizes them. There can no longer be a place for them in this great unitary and integrative chain in which love is revitalized by the reciprocity of pleasure.<sup>212</sup>

## vii. Synopsis

In this penultimate chapter, I have shown that Foucault's genealogical critique of the nature of *pouvoir*, which he articulates as a relation of government, also accounts for the political rationality that exercises governmentality. Configured from *pastoral-pouvoir*, political rationality combines with *somato-* and *bio-pouvoir* into the juridico-administrative-governmental state and effects the submission of humanism's subjectivity. In response to this experience, I have argued that Foucault turns to a critical history of subjectivity in his search for new conceptions of maturity, central to which is the distinction between the modes of subjectivation, or ethics, and a morality's codes and behaviours. As a result, he excavates the restructuration in the techniques of the self from a practice to a hermeneutics of the self, which takes place between antiquity and christianity.

On the one hand, Foucault claims that in greek antiquity a relation to self is engulfed by a relation to other, which is intimated by Plato's redirection of erotics, with its practice of love between the citizen and citizen-in-waiting, into a philosophical erotics and the citizen's leadership of the boy to truth and the fulfilment of his being in respect of a theorisation of the subject. Later, in græco-

<sup>209</sup> Foucault, *The Care of the Self*, pp. 202-207.

<sup>210</sup> Foucault, *The Care of the Self*, pp. 214-218.

<sup>211</sup> Foucault, *The Care of the Self*, pp. 219-227.

<sup>212</sup> Foucault, *The Care of the Self*, p. 207 and pp. 209-210.

## *A Critical History of Subjectivity and Ethico-Morality*

roman antiquity, philosophical erotics is superimposed upon economics, which requires a symmetrical relation to the other and an increased austerity that culminates in heterosexual marriage and the virginal integrity of at least one of its partners.<sup>213</sup>

On the other hand, critical historical critique brings an ethico-political subjectivity into view, where the self practices an agonistic freedom within a domain of pleasure, sex and desire that is defined by force, excess and combat. Divorced from its asymmetrical relation to other in terms of the ethico-social subjectivity of græco-roman antiquity, greek antiquity's relation to self promises an ascetic practice with an æsthetic style of existence, in which an agonistic freedom resists the forces within *pouvoir/savoir* which objectify, subject and submit maturity in the present.<sup>214</sup> On this basis, I demonstrate in the last chapter how Foucault's critical history of humanism's failure to realise enlightenment is matched by his post-humanist maturity, which flows from his three critiques of *savoir, pouvoir* and, in particular, of ethico-morality that I have discussed here.

<sup>213</sup> Foucault, *The Care of the Self*, pp. 228-231.

<sup>214</sup> Because, in antiquity's system of thought, "sexual behaviour was constituted as a domain of ethical practice in the form of the *aphrodisia*, of pleasurable acts situated in an agonistic field of forces difficult to control[,] ... a conduct that was rationally and morally admissible, ... aimed at an exact self-mastery ... whereby the subject would be 'stronger than himself' even in the power that he exercised over others". Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, p. 250.



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## *A Conclusion in Foucault's Critical Ontology*

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In order to defend Foucault from the accusations of anormative critique and amoral freedom, I deployed his critical history to attack the humanist critical thought that I articulated in chapters 2 and 3. To recall, humanism claims to be the sole path to enlightenment in virtue of its faith in a subject of knowledge, its theory of power and its conception of man whose autonomy requires recognition. By way of contrast, I demonstrated in chapters 4, 5 and 6 that Foucault practices critical thought along an alternative, nietzschean path. Here, critical history is a critique of the finitude grounded in humanism and of that omitted by—but pivotal to—its possibility, whilst as I argue below with critical ontology freedom is conceived of in terms of a mode of being that is pertinent to who we are. Writing as early as 1963 about the need to combine critique and ontology into a form of critical thought relevant to the present, Foucault reflects that:

a philosophy which questions itself upon the existence of the limit is evidently one of the countless signs that our path is circular and that, with each day, we are becoming more Greek. Yet, ... [i]n reintroducing the experience of the divine at the center of thought, philosophy has been well aware since Nietzsche ... that it questions an origin without positivity and an opening indifferent to the patience of the negative. No form of dialectical movement, no analysis of constitutions and of their transcendental ground can serve as support for thinking about such an experience or even as access to this experience. In our day, would not the instantaneous play of the limit and of transgression be the essential test for a thought ... which would be, absolutely and in the same motion, a Critique and an Ontology, an understanding that comprehends both finitude and being?<sup>1</sup>

Clearly, and notwithstanding that he never sought to take humanism's path to enlightenment, Foucault's consistent practice of critique in the interests of critical

<sup>1</sup> Foucault, "A Preface to Transgression", pp. 37-38.

### *A Conclusion in Foucault's Critical Ontology*

ontology refutes any habermasian suggestion that he rejoins it in the 1980s.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, contrary to the claims of his detractors, who confuse his critical history that rejects humanism with a repudiation of enlightenment, Foucault does not adhere to normative relativism and moral nihilism. Instead, because humanism is indicative of who we are, Foucault uses archæology, genealogy and critical history to investigate its objective, normative and subjective axes of experience. Essentially, Foucault draws up a balance-sheet of our finitude in the present. Critical history accounts for the domination of the debit side by the *pouvoir/savoir* that is produced by humanism, whilst through his three critiques Foucault enters on the credit side his reconceptualisation of *savoir*, *pouvoir* and ethico-morality.

At the same time as I questioned the suitability of humanist critique as a basis for maturity—the state of being autonomous in thought and action—I also suggested that, in tandem with Foucault's retrieval of a kantian notion of critique from its submergence beneath humanism, he adopts a nietzschean ontology of freedom as the *vis-à-vis* of *pouvoir*. His kantianism translates into an endorsement of critique as an analytic of the régimes of truth which make us conversant with finitude; and Foucault's nietzscheanism leads to a conception of maturity that is tantamount to the constitution of ethical subjectivity through an agonistic practice of freedom, which is an ongoing process of becoming in respect of our experiential limits of *pouvoir/savoir*. After Nietzsche, therefore, who concludes *A Genealogy of Morals* with the suggestion that “[o]ne cannot possibly hide from one's self what is ultimately expressed ... a *will to the nothing*”,<sup>3</sup> my intention in this concluding chapter to the dissertation is not only to cast doubt on humanism's path to enlightenment, but also to reject its protagonists' criticisms of Foucault and to advocate his critical ontology as a viable method for critical thought.

To begin with, I give an account of humanism in terms of the intellectual praxis of the philosopher, who from Bauman's analysis in section 1.i. is either a legislator at dawn for the day ahead, as for Kant and Rawls, or an interpreter at dusk of the day gone by, like Hegel and Taylor.<sup>4</sup> Apart from a recapitulation of their critique and maturity, Kant's and Rawls' legislative, as well as Hegel's and Taylor's interpretive, intellectual praxis hinders the comprehension of different

<sup>2</sup> Dews says that “[i]f one were to ... identify ... the distinctiveness of the French philosophical scene in the 1980s, compared with the entire preceding period since the Second World War, then the obvious choice would be the upsurge of interest in Kant”. Dews, *Logics of Disintegration*, p. xiii.

<sup>3</sup> Nietzsche, *A Genealogy of Morals*, p. 222.

<sup>4</sup> Needless to say, to demarcate roles of the philosopher is to traffick in ideal types—on this inevitability and how to mitigate it, see Schlesinger, “In search of the intellectuals”; Ludz, “Methodological Problems”.

### *A Conclusion in Foucault's Critical Ontology*

paths to enlightenment, and I focus on the criticisms of Foucault which stem from this incomprehension. He is, as many contemporary critical thinkers claim, responsible both for the death of the philosopher and for a breakdown in the advancement of how to think and act freely, or of critique that furthers maturity.

In reply, I stress the political connotations of three weaknesses in the intellectual praxis of the legislative and interpretive methods of humanism. Firstly, an archæology of objectivity uncovers *savoir* as the condition of possibility for *connaissance*, and not Kant's and Hegel's man; secondly, a genealogy of normativity reveals *somato-* and *bio-pouvoir* to be the extra-juridical conditions of existence for justice, rather than Rawls' and Taylor's subject who authorises right and legitimates the juridical state's exercise of power; and, thirdly, if the reason behind epistemologico-political critique is the truth of the subject's autonomy that is realised through recognition, then humanism fails as a critique of the *pouvoir/savoir* that is installed as the submission of subjectivity. Or, as humanism leaves man mired in immaturity, it falters as critical thought. In contrast, I elucidate Foucault's intellectual praxis of critical ontology, in which his professional and personal engagement is characterised by a kantian modern attitude and a nietzschean ascetic æsthetic mode of being. Critical history's critique of who we are, plus an ontology that is appropriate to maturity, ensure that Foucault epitomises enlightenment critical thought.

#### **7.i. The Intellectual Praxis of the Legislator and Interpreter**

There are, Nietzsche remarks, two kinds of philosopher. One ascertains facts for moral evaluations, which requires the mastery of the present and past by concentrating events in signs. The aim is "to make previous events ... comprehensible ... [and to] assist the task of man to employ all past things for the benefit of his future".<sup>5</sup> A second kind of philosopher is the legislator of these evaluations, who determines what is useful to man. He convinces himself that the good he desires is not his own but the good in itself, which he stumbles upon and is obliged to instruct to others.<sup>6</sup> The philosopher who ascertains evaluations is an interpreter, and his colleague who applies them is a legislator. They utilise truth to inform the critique that promotes freedom, and in describing the legislator's and interpreter's application of critical thought it is useful to bear in mind that, along its path to enlightenment, humanism juxtaposes reason with prejudice and maturity

<sup>5</sup> Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, § 972, pp. 509-510.

<sup>6</sup> Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, § 972, p. 510.

### *A Conclusion in Foucault's Critical Ontology*

with the tutelage of tradition. In Kant and Rawls, or Hegel and Taylor, critique lends existential re-assurance to modernity through heightening its consciousness of itself as the age that is en route to, or in fact is the age of, maturity, which is a question of the autonomous subject's self-actualisation through recognition of his authentic being. I turn then to look at their intellectual praxis of humanism.

The *philosophe's* will to surpass the late seventeenth century English enlightenment, fit only for the classical liberal man,<sup>7</sup> depends on the ability of reason to logically order the world and things.<sup>8</sup> As the agent of the critique that is deployed against the prejudices upheld by christian ontology,<sup>9</sup> the *philosophe's* sense of man's impending maturity motivates what Ernst Cassirer designates as the enlightenment's epistemological reconstruction, where reason supplants convention and traditional authority.<sup>10</sup> In this respect, Gadamer writes that:

the real radicality of the ... enlightenment [is its desire] ... to understand tradition correctly, i. e. reasonably and without prejudice. ... It is the general tendency of the enlightenment not to accept any authority and to decide everything before the judgement seat of reason.<sup>11</sup>

On this basis, the legislator's critique is directed at the ingredients of prejudice – custom and habit, for example<sup>12</sup> – because in the realms of thought and action they amount to over generalised beliefs and arbitrary motivations.<sup>13</sup> Insofar as to be a subject of prejudice is to think and act immaturely, the role of the legislator is to juridicalise it. He disinvests prejudice from knowledge and power in order to re-invest them with the reasoned right of the *volonté générale*, *Moralität* or procedural justice.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>7</sup> The English enlightenment "stood primarily for the cult of commercial prosperity, the prestige of middle-class standards, the spread of polite manners and culture among the *nouveaux riches*, and, above all, the natural right to make money". Randall, *The Career of Philosophy Volume II*, p. 51.

<sup>8</sup> d'Alembert, *Preliminary Discourse*, pp. 63-84; Im Hof, *The Enlightenment*, pp. 4-8; Hampson, *The Enlightenment*, pp. 4-11.

<sup>9</sup> On the ascendancy of human reason in mid-eighteenth century Europe and France, see Cassirer, *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment*, pp. 14ff.; Gay, *The Enlightenment, Volume 2*, pp. 167-180; Charle, *Naissance des 'intellectuels' 1880-1900*, pp. 20-23; Roche, *Les Républicains des lettres*, pp. 209-225.

<sup>10</sup> Cassirer, *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment*, pp. 228-234.

<sup>11</sup> Gadamer, "The Historicity of Understanding", p. 257.

<sup>12</sup> Oakeshott, "Rationalism in Politics", pp. 7-14.

<sup>13</sup> Allport, *The Nature of Prejudice*, pp. 9-15; Keith, *The Place of Prejudice in Modern Civilization*, pp. 39ff.; Rose, *The Roots of Prejudice*, pp. 11-17.

<sup>14</sup> For the etymology of *i(j)ús* and *dicere*, which evolve into the concept juridical and the verb to say or declare the law – that is, for instance, to juridicalise prejudice *a propos* of man's reason – see Barnhart, *The Barnhart Dictionary of Etymology*, p. 560; Onions, *The Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology*, p. 500; Partridge, *Origins*, p. 325; Skeat, *An Etymological Dictionary of the English Language*, p. 319.

### *A Conclusion in Foucault's Critical Ontology*

Rousseau's importance, to re-iterate from sections 2.i. and 2.ii., is his paradigmatic sketch of humanism's epistemological and political critique. They promise maturity due to man's representation of the world via a universal language and his common determination of the socio-political structures in which he lives. Nevertheless, motivated by his wish to free man's mind from prejudice, the rousseauian legislator promotes the unhindered use of human reason as an infallible guide for critique and moral conduct.<sup>15</sup> His zeal fuels the jacobin juridicalisation of 1789-1794, which Edmund Burke famously argues "eradicate[s] prejudice out of the minds of men, for the purpose of putting all power ... into the hands of the persons capable of occasionally enlightening the minds of the people".<sup>16</sup> Accordingly, even Kant, who is no friend of the christian ontology of the Prussian pietists and their conservative brethren in England,<sup>17</sup> believes that the revolutionary overthrow of prejudice not only fails to reform critical thought, but that its "new prejudices, like the ones they replaced, will serve as a leash to control the great unthinking mass".<sup>18</sup>

Consequently, as I pointed out in section 2.iii., Rousseau's legislative critique in the interests of a reason which knows no bounds is tempered by the systematic critical philosophy of Kant. He defers to the transcendental subject's faculty of understanding to discipline reason and steer the age of enlightenment towards an enlightened age. Armed, as I described in sections 2.iv and 2.v., with the principles of a knowledge of things-for-themselves and man's capacity for self-legislation, the kantian legislator detects the prejudices which block the exit to maturity. Thanks to his abstract principles of truth,<sup>19</sup> the kantian legislator belongs to the class of philosophers "whose activity essentially is *not* the pursuit of practical aims, ... [but] metaphysical speculation" about the prejudices ripe for juridicalisation.<sup>20</sup> Kant carves out a niche for himself as the king's legislative adviser on the precept of the autonomous subject,<sup>21</sup> or he counsels the state on the maxims of warfare and peace-making. In fact, the kantian legislator is obliged to offer his services in virtue of his attachment to the only true universal, human reason, which for Kant is the ultimate moral legislator. Nonetheless, the philosopher is not prioritised over the jurist, who

<sup>15</sup> Oakeshott, "Rationalism in Politics", pp. 3-5; Oakeshott, "Rational Conduct", pp. 83-85.

<sup>16</sup> Burke, "Letter to William Smith, 1795", in *The Philosophy of Edmund Burke*, p. 231.

<sup>17</sup> See, for instance, Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, pp. 171-200.

<sup>18</sup> Kant, "An Answer to the Question: 'What is Enlightenment?'" , p. 55.

<sup>19</sup> Benda, *The Treason of the Intellectuals*, pp. 44-52.

<sup>20</sup> Benda, *The Treason of the Intellectuals*, p. 43.

<sup>21</sup> Kant, "Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch", p. 103.

## *A Conclusion in Foucault's Critical Ontology*

represents the juridical state, and nor does Kant expect kings to do philosophy or philosophers to be kings. Instead, he suggests that the possession of power inevitably corrupts the free use of reason, whereas philosophers who are independent of power are incapable of being swayed from the truth.<sup>22</sup> All in all, the kantian legislator is the harbinger of man's authentic being of autonomy. The maxim of maturity is a necessary thorn in the side of the monarch, who under the guidance of the legislator's critique fades into the limelight generated by the *demos*' juridical state. "*Popular enlightenment*", Kant says,

is the public instruction of the people upon their duties and rights towards the state to which they belong. ... [The] obvious exponents and interpreters among the people will not be officials appointed by the state, but free teachers of right, i. e. the philosophers. The latter, on account of the very freedom which they allow themselves, are a stumbling-block to the state, whose only wish is to rule; they are accordingly given the appellation of 'enlighteners', and decried as a menace to the state.<sup>23</sup>

Rawls differs from Kant by way of his rejection of the cartesian philosophical hierarchy of epistemology.<sup>24</sup> For the rawlsian legislator, whose philosophy-as-defence is both an apologia of the dominant moral doctrine of the day and a contribution to a new one,<sup>25</sup> the *demos* ground the truth that underpins critique. If moral philosophy is the study of moral concepts and objective moral truths, then its sub-branch of moral theory that is practiced by Rawls reveals, as I detailed in sections 3.ii and 3.iii., the moral doctrines which structure justice in a society. Via the universal agreement about a particular one amongst rational persons who have achieved reflective equilibrium, a moral doctrine attains the status of objective truth.<sup>26</sup> Due to the rawlsian legislator's ability to uncover an underlying basis of agreement, the moral theorist deploys his democratic moral epistemology in his moonlighting role as a political philosopher,<sup>27</sup> who in an effort to uphold the conditions of possibility for political liberty of a secure and stable society engages in its politically divisive questions.<sup>28</sup> Because Rawls' philosophy assumes that the world is an "ongoing system of co-operation over time",<sup>29</sup> it readily translates into a

<sup>22</sup> Kant, "Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch", pp. 114-115.

<sup>23</sup> Kant, "The Contest of Faculties", p. 186.

<sup>24</sup> Rawls, "The Independence of Moral Theory", pp. 287-291.

<sup>25</sup> Rawls, *Lectures on the History of Moral Philosophy*, pp. 106-107.

<sup>26</sup> Rawls, "The Independence of Moral Theory", p. 301.

<sup>27</sup> Rawls, "Justice as Fairness: Political not Metaphysical", p. 391.

<sup>28</sup> Rawls, "Kantian Constructivism in Moral Theory", p. 330.

<sup>29</sup> Rawls, "The Idea of an Overlapping Consensus", p. 448.

### *A Conclusion in Foucault's Critical Ontology*

political philosophy that focuses solely on institutional questions. In this role, the rawlsian legislator undertakes a kantian defence of reasonable faith, which in "our case becomes the defense of reasonable faith in the real possibility of a just constitutional regime".<sup>30</sup> The public culture of a democratic society receives its legislative critique from the political philosopher, whose prior legitimation as a moral theorist of a society's moral doctrine of procedural justice defines the rawlsian legislator's goal, political liberty, and his role, which is:

to articulate and to make explicit those shared notions and principles thought to be already latent in common sense; or, as is often the case if common sense is hesitant and uncertain, and doesn't know what to think, to propose to it certain conceptions and principles congenial to its most essential convictions and historical traditions.<sup>31</sup>

From the interpreter's point of view, which I first analysed in section 2.vi., the legislator's abstract, theoretical knowledge that juridicalises prejudice brings his intellectual praxis into disrepute.<sup>32</sup> Walzer, for example, speaks of the path of discovery that is travelled by the kantian legislator, who oblivious to a community's experiences imitates the wisdom of an eagle at daybreak and foists an abstract *Moralität* upon people.<sup>33</sup> Similarly, the rawlsian legislator, who travels along the path of invention, fares no better. He constructs a theoretical ideal of procedural justice from one rather than another of the moral doctrines in a society.<sup>34</sup>

In contrast, the legislator's critics demand the rehabilitation of prejudice precisely because it harbours the reality of the subject's maturity.<sup>35</sup> The interpreter, who believes "[o]ur historical consciousness is always filled with a variety of voices in which the echo of the past is heard",<sup>36</sup> argues that reason is discoverable within prejudice. In fact, the interpreter's rejection of the legislator's desire to transcend tradition in the interests of maturity goes hand in hand with an articulation of prejudices, which as they "barbarize or define us, ... like that of the air we breathe in",<sup>37</sup> constitute the conditions of possibility for recognition. However, the interpreter is concerned neither with the romantic's conception of reason as the

<sup>30</sup> Rawls, "The Idea of an Overlapping Consensus", p. 448.

<sup>31</sup> Rawls, "Kantian Constructivism in Moral Theory", p. 306.

<sup>32</sup> Bauman, *Legislators and Interpreters*, pp. 120-126.

<sup>33</sup> Walzer, *Interpretation and Social Criticism*, pp. 4-8.

<sup>34</sup> Walzer, *Interpretation and Social Criticism*, pp. 10-17.

<sup>35</sup> Gadamer, "The Historicity of Understanding", p. 258 and p. 265.

<sup>36</sup> Gadamer, "The Historicity of Understanding", p. 267.

<sup>37</sup> Burke, "First Letter on a Regicide Peace, 1796", in *The Philosophy of Edmund Burke*, p. 237.

## *A Conclusion in Foucault's Critical Ontology*

antithesis of prejudice,<sup>38</sup> which Hegel believes destroys love and right among private persons and the laws of the state,<sup>39</sup> nor with the abstract and theoretical reason of the legislator, who is bifurcated from the world. Instead, the interpreter seeks the reason latent in prejudice in order to validate communities of meaning via knowledge that is endogenous to them,<sup>40</sup> or he lends intra-communal legitimacy through an interpretive critique of existence that begins from principles internal to it.<sup>41</sup>

In the hands of the interpreter, humanism comprehends *Geist's* concept of reason in prejudice as well as its actuality therein.<sup>42</sup> The role of the hegelian interpreter is to reflect upon thought. Because it is not contingent but located in what has being-in and -for-itself, *Geist*, the activity of reflection amounts to a purer form of freedom than that actually enjoyed by the laity.<sup>43</sup> Yet the interpreter advances nothing new, and what he brings forth, Hegel says, "is already the immediate prejudice of everyone".<sup>44</sup> For the hegelian interpreter,

what matters is to recognise in the semblance of the temporal and the transient the substance which is immanent and the eternal which is present. For since the rational, which is synonymous with the Idea, becomes actual by entering into external existence ... , it emerges in an infinite wealth of ... appearances ... and surrounds its core with a brightly coloured covering in which consciousness at first resides, but which only the concept can penetrate in order to find the inner pulse, and detect its continued beat even within the external shapes.<sup>45</sup>

Nonetheless, the hegelian interpreter, who paints the grey of life that has grown old, which cannot be rejuvenated but only recognised in philosophy's own grey, resists involvement in the wealth of prejudices where *Geist* is at work.<sup>46</sup> Instead, to discern the recognition necessary for self-actualisation, he fiddles as Rome burns.<sup>47</sup> As I illustrated in sections 2.vii. and 2.viii., the hegelian interpreter comprehends the actual in thought, for what is in the post-*Aufklärung* world—a

<sup>38</sup> Gadamer, "The Historicity of Understanding", p. 264.

<sup>39</sup> Hegel, *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, Preface, p. 18.

<sup>40</sup> Bauman, *Legislators and Interpreters*, pp. 137-148 and pp. 197ff..

<sup>41</sup> Walzer, *Interpretation and Social Criticism*, pp. 19-30.

<sup>42</sup> Hegel, *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, §§ 1-2, pp. 25-26.

<sup>43</sup> Hegel, *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, Preface, p. 22.

<sup>44</sup> Hegel, *Encyclopædia of the Philosophical Sciences*, quoted in Inwood, *Hegel*, p. 111.

<sup>45</sup> Hegel, *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, Preface, pp. 20-21.

<sup>46</sup> Hegel, *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, Preface, p. 23.

<sup>47</sup> Inwood, *Hegel*, pp. 107-110.



### *A Conclusion in Foucault's Critical Ontology*

mode of reason that promises maturity – is what ought to be.<sup>48</sup> It is thus important to distinguish between what Rawls calls Hegel's philosophy of reconciliation *vis-à-vis* existent grey life, and resignation in the face of it.<sup>49</sup> Scientific philosophy delivers, from out of life that has grown old, the rational to the actual through the medium of secular revelation, history.<sup>50</sup> Via critique based on the faculty of reason's knowledge of the world as it actually is, the hegelian interpreter legitimates tomorrow's dawn of *Geist* at the dusk of the old order of *Aufklärung*. Maturity is not only a question of the autonomous subject's transcendence of prejudice as a means to fulfil his authentic being, but of its self-actualisation under the auspices of a dialectic of reason that realises man's desire for recognition out of prejudice.

Just as Rawls jettisons Kant's metaphysics in favour of the *demos'* consensus about a moral doctrine, so Hegel's scion, Taylor, strives less after the *Geist* inherent in prejudice than agreement about a language community's background ontological picture.<sup>51</sup> The taylorian interpreter, who I portrayed in sections 3.iv. and 3.v., articulates the hyper-goods which constitute moral ontology. These range from notions of the good and understandings of the human agent, to the kinds of narrative in which recognition is reciprocated between people.<sup>52</sup> Still, to distinguish the language of meaning as a possession of the community, the hermeneutic circle is circumscribed by an ultimate appeal to the common rather than subjective understandings of an expression.<sup>53</sup> For Taylor, the subject is not necessarily the best authority in the endeavour to articulate moral ontology. Often, for example, his moral actions are based on views that are largely implicit, or at other times the subject resists articulation because of the divergence between what he believes and the philosophical basis of his moral judgements that he ought to acknowledge.<sup>54</sup> The language community's moral ontology may be constituted by its citizens and their assertions, but the subject depends for experiential meaning on the expressions of others and ultimately on the interpreter, whose role is to articulate those which are central to political liberation.<sup>55</sup> As with Rawls' legislative advice about a society's moral conceptions and his advocacy of the moral doctrine of

<sup>48</sup> Hegel, *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, Preface, p. 21.

<sup>49</sup> Rawls, *Lectures on the History of Moral Philosophy*, p. 331.

<sup>50</sup> Westphal, *History and Truth*, pp. 43-52.

<sup>51</sup> Taylor, *Sources of the Self*, p. 8.

<sup>52</sup> Taylor, *Sources of the Self*, pp. 25-52.

<sup>53</sup> Taylor, "Interpretation and the sciences of man", pp. 16-17.

<sup>54</sup> Taylor, *Sources of the Self*, pp. 9-10.

<sup>55</sup> Taylor, "Interpretation and the sciences of man", pp. 26-28.

## *A Conclusion in Foucault's Critical Ontology*

political liberalism, when all is said and done it is the meaning of the interpreter's legitimative word that counts about hyper-goods, which in addition to their substantiation of procedural justice are integral to the politics of recognition.<sup>56</sup> Taylor argues, for instance, that because hyper-goods empower,

[t]o come closer to them, to have a clearer view of them, to come to grasp what they involve, is for those who recognize them to be moved to love or respect them. And articulation can bring them closer. ... And of course not just any articulation will do. ... [T]he most powerful case is where the speaker, the formulation, and the act of delivering the message all line up together to reveal the good, ... . An effective articulation releases this force, and this is how words have power.<sup>57</sup>

### **7.ii. The Legislator's and Interpreter's Criticisms of Foucault**

In the previous section, I have retrodden the main steps on the path to enlightenment that is forged by humanism through the intellectual praxis of the legislator and interpreter. At its core, the truth of man's maturity of autonomy and recognition allows the humanist to place the subject at the centre of things in an objective world that he knows as it appears or actually is. Alternatively, the truth about the subject of right is the reason behind the deployment of normative justice to regulate juridical power on behalf of political liberty, or it allows the state to be commandeered to process political liberation. In either moment, epistemological and political critique guarantees man's safe passage through prejudice to a level of maturity that is either beyond (Kant and Rawls), or derived from (Hegel and Taylor), custom and habit. The champions of humanism pursue enlightenment through a will to know the truth about the objectivity of things and the normativity which justifies juridical state power. As a consequence, it is the status of truth, which in Foucault's critical thought is a product and property of *pouvoir/savoir* rather than an independent variable, that humanist philosophers concentrate upon in their criticisms of his alleged anormative critique and amoral freedom: for what, if not an epistemological or political truth, is Foucault's ground of critique?; and what, if not the autonomous subject's authentic being that requires recognition for self-actualisation, is his conceptual basis for freedom?

Richard Rorty, for example, claims that the critical historian's archæological methodology simply proves that French philosophy forbids one to settle for

<sup>56</sup> Taylor, "Language and Human Nature", pp. 218-221.

<sup>57</sup> Taylor, *Sources of the Self*, p. 96.

### *A Conclusion in Foucault's Critical Ontology*

interesting new descriptions to replace boring ones.<sup>58</sup> Foucault's anti-objectivist archaeology, which rejects traditional epistemology without offering an alternative, lies midway between a bleak apocalypse and a dionysian urge.<sup>59</sup> Like other irrationalists, who disparage epistemological concerns, Foucault is a transrational romantic.<sup>60</sup> He is, Merquior continues, a misologist who seeks relations of meaning in madness or the episteme, which is at the expense of relations of cause and effect.<sup>61</sup> In the end, and albeit in the Heidegger and Nietzsche mould, Foucault's critical historical inquiries are inferior.<sup>62</sup> Genealogy merely descends from representational language, which elucidates truth, into discourse *qua* will to power that produces the subject.<sup>63</sup> Rather than forge a path to enlightenment, Christopher Norris argues that genealogy ends up in a politico-moral cul-de-sac, where critique is a rhetorical strategy.<sup>64</sup> The foucauldian thinker-as-rebel offers a mythical analysis of power that caters solely for radical tastes and ignores careful philosophical argument.<sup>65</sup> Try as he may, Foucault's prejudice against reason entails a dismissal of agency,<sup>66</sup> which is synonymous with a thinned down normative commitment to freedom.<sup>67</sup>

Perhaps Habermas and Taylor drive the final nail into Foucault's coffin in respect of his supposed anormative critique and amoral freedom. From Frankfurt, Foucault's aversion to truth means that neither the archaeologist's stoic gaze that freezes history into an iceberg, nor the cynical gaze of the genealogist who defrosts and remoulds it, move us beyond a subjectless will of power inherent to *pouvoir/savoir*. Foucault's genealogical historiography, which assumes power has a structuralist, transcendental application that can serve as a critique of reason's claim to objectivity, suffers from the same illusions Foucault detects in the human sciences.<sup>68</sup> According to Habermas, genealogical critique is presentistic, in that every time it tries to undertake an objective analysis of the past it originates from a hermeneutic point of departure in the present; secondly, in its reduction of

<sup>58</sup> Rorty, "Foucault and Epistemology", pp. 42-43.

<sup>59</sup> Merquior, *Foucault*, p. 83. and p. 75.

<sup>60</sup> Merquior, *From Prague to Paris*, pp. 187-199

<sup>61</sup> Merquior, *From Prague to Paris*, p. 208.

<sup>62</sup> Gauchet and Westerwelle, "Für eine historisch wahre Geschichte des Subjects", pp. 673-674.

<sup>63</sup> Palmer, *Descent into Discourse*, pp. 25-28.

<sup>64</sup> Norris, "'What is Enlightenment'", pp. 30-35.

<sup>65</sup> Merquior, *From Prague to Paris*, pp. 238-239.

<sup>66</sup> Merquior, *Foucault*, p. 107.

<sup>67</sup> Norris, "'What is Enlightenment'", p. 47.

<sup>68</sup> Habermas, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, pp. 242-256.

### *A Conclusion in Foucault's Critical Ontology*

normativity to the effects of power, Foucault's critique is relativistic; and, thirdly, genealogy mirrors the cryptonormative critique of the human sciences.<sup>69</sup> "The aporias of the theory of power", Habermas argues,

leave their traces behind in the selective readings of genealogical historiography ... . To the objectivism of the self-mastery of the human sciences there corresponds a subjectivism of self-forgetfulness on Foucault's part. Presentism, relativism, and cryptonormativism are the consequences of his attempt to preserve the transcendental moment proper to generative performances in the basic concept of power while driving from it every trace of subjectivity. This concept of power does not free the genealogist from contradictory self-thematizations.<sup>70</sup>

Ultimately, Habermas says, Foucault is silent when it comes to a normative critique of the all-pervasive power circulating in the bloodstream of the modern social body.<sup>71</sup> His subject-phobia reduces all social processes to patterns of domination.<sup>72</sup> If Foucault is to convince Habermas that he is more than a young conservative whose total critique of modernity does not turn in on itself<sup>73</sup>—if he is to do more than aestheticise politics and morality into a transfiguring play of freedom with reality<sup>74</sup>—Foucault must assuage Habermas' skepticism with critique.<sup>75</sup> Why, Habermas asks, ought we to oppose and fight régimes of *pouvoir/savoir*?<sup>76</sup>

There is a not dissimilar perspective from Montréal, where concern is raised about Foucault's amoral freedom. It is once again sparked by his location of truth in *pouvoir/savoir*. In line with Habermas, Taylor alludes to Foucault's monolithic relativism, or his position of neutrality toward history and his unwillingness to make evaluative distinctions between forms of power.<sup>77</sup> And, apart from the basic one-sidedness of Foucault's analysis that Taylor and others highlight,<sup>78</sup> critical history amounts to a senseless strategies without projects historiography.<sup>79</sup> But

<sup>69</sup> Habermas, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, pp. 276-282.

<sup>70</sup> Habermas, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, pp. 294-295.

<sup>71</sup> Habermas, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, p. 283.

<sup>72</sup> Merquior, *Foucault*, pp. 111-115.

<sup>73</sup> Habermas, "Modernity: An incomplete project", pp. 13-14.

<sup>74</sup> Norris, "'What is Enlightenment'", p. 62.

<sup>75</sup> Habermas, "Taking Aim at the Heart of the Present", p. 107.

<sup>76</sup> Habermas, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, p. 284.

<sup>77</sup> Taylor, "Foucault on Freedom and Truth", pp. 156-163 and p. 182.

<sup>78</sup> Taylor, "Foucault on Freedom and Truth", pp. 164-166. McNay, *Foucault*, ch. 1, and Merquior, *Foucault*, ch. 2, share Taylor's view here.

<sup>79</sup> Taylor, "Foucault on Freedom and Truth", pp. 169-170.

### *A Conclusion in Foucault's Critical Ontology*

what really concerns Taylor is Foucault's "[p]ower' without 'freedom' or 'truth': can there really be an analysis which uses the notion of power, and which leaves no place for freedom, or truth"?<sup>80</sup>

Rather than articulate a community's moral ontology and its importance to the constitution of identity *à la* Taylor, especially the underlying image of the self who enjoys freedom and the power to will,<sup>81</sup> Foucault denies the need for articulation.<sup>82</sup> His neo-nietzschean arbitrariness of interpretation, and interpretation as an imposition of domination, means that Foucault skews moral philosophy in the direction of subjectivism.<sup>83</sup> For Taylor, Foucault's construction of the self as a work of art is difficult to accept in the face of his rejection of those strands in modern thought which are central to this conception – "[b]ut what is striking again is the ... utterly self-related freedom that this ideal entails".<sup>84</sup> In answer to his question about Foucault's conceptualisation of power without associated notions of freedom or truth, Taylor laments that:

the final basis of Foucault's refusal of 'truth' and 'liberation' seems to be a Nietzschean one ... . [T]here is no order of human life; or what we are, or human nature, ... only different orders imposed by men on primal chaos, following their will to power. Foucault espouses both the relativistic thesis from this view, that one cannot judge between forms of life/thought/valuation, and also the notion that these different forms involve the imposition of power. ... To speak of power, and to want to deny a place to 'liberation' and 'truth', as well as the link between them, is to [sic] to speak coherently.<sup>85</sup>

Finally, where Foucault's role as a critical ontologist is concerned, for representatives of humanism's path to enlightenment his anormative critique and amoral freedom betray an empty intellectual praxis. Among the English intelligentsia, for instance, Foucault's abdication of critique personifies the post-1968 treason of the intellectual,<sup>86</sup> which is imitated in America as a rococo marxism that is infatuated with theory and indifferent to objectivity and normativity.<sup>87</sup> In reply to the decline of marxism's universal interpretations,<sup>88</sup> Foucault not only aids

<sup>80</sup> Taylor, "Foucault on Freedom and Truth", p. 174.

<sup>81</sup> Taylor, "Introduction", p. 5.

<sup>82</sup> Taylor, *Sources of the Self*, pp. 99-100.

<sup>83</sup> Taylor, *Sources of the Self*, p. 487 and p. 102.

<sup>84</sup> Taylor, *Sources of the Self*, p. 489.

<sup>85</sup> Taylor, "Foucault on Freedom and Truth", p. 177. Presumably, this should read "is not to speak coherently" or "is to speak incoherently"?

<sup>86</sup> A. S. Byatt, "Belief in the jungle of ideas", in *The Guardian*, 29 August 1998.

<sup>87</sup> T. Wolfe, "The tyranny of theory", in *The Guardian*, 8 July 2000.

<sup>88</sup> Ory and Sirinelli, *Les Intellectuels en France*, p. 236.

### *A Conclusion in Foucault's Critical Ontology*

the dethronement of economics from critical thought, but he retreats into a spiritual discourse on subjectivity that is devoid of any critique.<sup>89</sup> As a postvanguardist intellectual who employs *philosophische Archäologie* as farce,<sup>90</sup> his obscurantism exemplifies the hermetic critic-in-small in the university. Indeed, what the critical ontologist thinks is a mystery for Walzer, which is exacerbated by the absence of any criteria to judge Foucault's critique.<sup>91</sup>

Perhaps Bernard-Henri Lévy brings these perspectives on Foucault together when he suggests that critical history is amoral in its refusal to privilege truth.<sup>92</sup> Because archæology forecloses any alternative theoretical space in which to conceive non-hegemonic forms of subjectivity, and genealogy posits an interdependence between the subject and power that precludes a notion of active agency,<sup>93</sup> Foucault is the cause of the philosopher's post-1968 apocalyptic vision of *une fin du monde*. He is, Lévy concludes, culpable for the death of the intellectual, whose existence since the Dreyfus Affair in 1898 finally comes to an end when he "dies in Paris at the end of the twentieth century due to his inability to survive beyond the decline of the universal claims of philosophy".<sup>94</sup>

#### **7.iii. Foucault's Anti-Humanism**

A precondition for the above criticisms of Foucault is the incomprehension of his nietzschean path to enlightenment. As I first mentioned in section 1.i., although his three critiques self-consciously avoid—rather than court<sup>95</sup>—a descent into irrationality,<sup>96</sup> their depiction of the ambivalence of reason in modernity, specifically how it translates into objective and normative experience via humanism, is mistaken for a dismissal of enlightenment. Similarly, as I showed with a critical history of subjectivity and ethico-morality in chapter 6, Foucault's desire to insert a practice of the self at the centre of maturity entails a concomitant renunciation of the hermeneutic relation to self that underwrites autonomy and recognition. His conceptualisation of ethics, which is unacceptable "because all too

<sup>89</sup> Reader, *Intellectuals and the Left in France since 1968*, pp. 13-22.

<sup>90</sup> Bell, "Michel Foucault: A Philosopher for all seasons?", p. 344.

<sup>91</sup> Walzer, *The Company of Critics*, pp. 227-229 and pp. 206-209.

<sup>92</sup> Lévy, *Éloge des Intellectuels*, pp. 17-45.

<sup>93</sup> McNay, *Foucault*, pp. 102-112.

<sup>94</sup> "Intellectuel, ... catégorie sociale et culturelle née à Paris au moment de l'affaire Dreyfus, morte à Paris à la fin du XXe siècle; n'a apparemment pas survécu au déclin de l'Universel". Lévy, *Éloge des Intellectuels*, p. 48.

<sup>95</sup> Habermas, "Conservatism and Capitalist Crisis", p. 74.

<sup>96</sup> Foucault, "Critical Theory/Intellectual History", p. 35.

### *A Conclusion in Foucault's Critical Ontology*

many ... have only that [hermeneutic] relation as an imagined last barrier to nihilism",<sup>97</sup> explains the unwillingness of legislators and interpreters to acknowledge either his critique *qua* critical history, or his critical ontology that conceives of freedom. At worst, advocates of humanism disclose an attitude to Foucault in which the final objective is "not to come as close as possible to a difficult truth, but to bring about the triumph" of their intellectual praxis.<sup>98</sup> So, before I demonstrate that Foucault embodies critical thought, I outline in this section how humanism's path to enlightenment falls short of its own goal, which is to secure the universal conditions necessary for freedom. Does objective epistemological critique that is based on the autonomous subject's authentic being and his self-actualisation, and normative political critique that grounds man's political liberty and demands his political liberation, actually nurture a state of being autonomous in thought and action?

From chapters 4, 5 and 6, in which I discussed Foucault's three critiques of the objective, normative and subjective experience of humanism, it is clear that the latter fails to pave the way to free thought and action. In order to realise freedom, epistemological critique takes as its point of departure the kantian subject's transcendental unity of apperception, which helps man to shoulder the *connaissance* necessary for an analysis of his finitude. However, to know these limits of who we are requires *connaissance* of man as an object. This ushers in the hegelian subject's phenomenological journey toward the transcendental dialectic, where he idealises the world before he returns with an empirical analysis of man within it. But an archaeological critique of man's objective experience reveals him to be the condition for his own possibility. As an empirico-transcendental *doublet*, man invites an anthropological dialectical history of modernity's unhindered progress toward enlightenment, which is a history that is necessarily representative of man only. Where he operates as the subject of objective experience, namely, within the domains of language, life and labour, which are represented by the human sciences of literature, psychology and sociology, critique establishes the criteria which encourage a history of reason that is limited solely to sameness. As a result, Kant legislates in the interests of the authentic being of the normal autonomous subject, whilst Hegel interprets the structures of recognition which sustain an exclusive process of self-actualisation.

Foucault, who tests the limits of our experience of truth in order to wander in

<sup>97</sup> Bernauer, "Michel Foucault's Ecstatic Thinking", p. 48.

<sup>98</sup> Foucault, "Polemics, Politics, and Problematizations", p. 382.

### *A Conclusion in Foucault's Critical Ontology*

error beyond it,<sup>99</sup> therefore establishes the philosophical platform on which others stand politically. Feminists, multi-culturalists, anti-colonialists, environmentalists and other contemporary advocates of the cultural value of difference, the political and linguistic rights of minorities and the economic costs of modernisation allude to the perspective of sameness that is required for the objective experience necessary for autonomy and recognition. As Foucault and these critical thinkers highlight, epistemological critique grounded in anthropocentric dialectical history lends existential re-assurance to a modernity in which some and not others have a heightened consciousness of themselves as living in an age of *Aufklärung*, or an already enlightened age of *Geist*. This is why, in respect of humanism's objective experience of finitude that is supposedly universal in scope and concrete in effect, Foucault's archæological critique excavates within the human sciences the tranquillised sleep of Kant's transcendental subject, who in turn spurs on the anthropological sleep of Hegel's phenomenological subject.

The political price of humanism's epistemological critique of objectivity becomes more apparent with Foucault's genealogy of its normative experience. In contemporary critical thought normativity often relies on Rawls' revelation of procedural justice in virtue of the subject's capacity for reason, and his legislation of political liberty on behalf of man's rational capacity for a sense of the good. Otherwise, normativity depends on Taylor's articulation of the hyper-goods which are fundamental to the political liberation of the subject, who as a self-interpreting language user seeks to dialogically express his deep sense of self. In addition, as I suggested in section 3.vi., Rawls' and Taylor's political critique informs the intellectual praxis of Kymlicka, MacCormick or Tamir, which is founded on embedded individuality. Nevertheless, in its focus on sameness, which is symbolised by the subject of right, humanists are oblivious to the costs to maturity which are exacted by their normativity.

On the one hand, Foucault's genealogical critique of normative experience highlights its extra-juridical condition of possibility as the objectification of the mad, deviant and perverted, and their confinement and exclusion in the asylum, penitentiary and reformatory. Discursive practices such as psychiatry, criminology and psychoanalysis, which can only produce a normative analysis of finitude on behalf of the citizen who is the same, invariably have effects of power beyond man's world. *A propos* of their normative assumption for critique of the subject of right, these discursive practices find their non-discursive employment as subjection

<sup>99</sup> Sheridan, "Michel Foucault: The Death of the Author", p. 20.



### *A Conclusion in Foucault's Critical Ontology*

in the society which denies political liberation to, withdraws political liberty from, and imposes certain identities like homosexual or malthusian couple upon, those who are different. To be sure, because Foucault's genealogical critique has its empirical basis in France, it is unfeasible to implicate Rawls and Taylor in specific manifestations of *pouvoir/savoir*, or to hold them accountable for forms of politics which are based on historical narratives that describe how reason emerges unscathed, and descends unfettered, from an origin. Nonetheless, because their hypothesis for the normativity that informs political liberalism and a politics of recognition is a reasonable moral psychology and desire to be normal, or a consciousness of an ethic of authenticity and its historical conditions of possibility, which include the commercial bourgeoisie and the institution of marriage, Rawls and Taylor are in effect indifferent to the experience that is neglected by, yet vital to the functioning of, their political critique.

In this respect, a failure to see the confined madman, the imprisoned deviant or the sexually excluded behind the veneer of political liberty and political liberation, above all in places like Britain, America and Quebec, respectively, is a major oversight of the extra-juridical capillary *pouvoir* that underpins humanist finitude. Rawls' philosophical assumption of the world as an ongoing system of co-operation over time, for example, is an extremely naive account of intersubjective harmony, above all in a country where a veil of ignorance continues to shroud the elimination of (savage) natives by the (civilised) European, which as for many countries—Canada, South Africa, Australia—is the original victory in the relation of force that underpins the domination inherent to the social contract of the founding fathers. Alternatively, in his focus on a society's background moral ontology to discern the hyper-goods relevant to the normal citizen's self-actualisation, Taylor overlooks the asymmetrical relations which historically distort recognition between men and women, catholic and heathen, gentleman and boer, family and tribe, or the white's property by right and the aborigine's confinement by might. In short, the absence in humanist critique of a conception of the extra-juridical conditions of possibility for normativity merely affirms the perspectivism of their critique for the maturity of some that is to the detriment of others, which is why a critical history that shares the same ideal of maturity but follows a different path to its realisation is imperative and long overdue.

On the other hand, and concomitant with the confined exclusion necessary for normativity, there is the objectification and subjection by *pouvoir/savoir* of those citizens at large in the social body, which Foucault reveals via a genealogy of humanism's normative experience that mediates who we are as social beings.

### *A Conclusion in Foucault's Critical Ontology*

Whether in their origins in the factory, hospital, military barracks and school, or their broader application amongst juridical subjects whose normality sustains the contract that legitimates the juridical state, or through the apparatus of sexuality and health which inform intersubjective relations of capillary *pouvoir*, mechanisms of *somato-* and *bio-pouvoir* and their techniques of examination and confession discipline the citizen's body and regulate him as a subject of the population. Like objective *connaissance*, which details humanism's analysis of finitude in terms of epistemological critique that is founded on the same, normative experience that is engendered by political critique turns on the confined exclusion of the abnormal from the normalised society of man.

Lastly, there is the issue of the subjective experience that is fostered by humanism, where it is first proposed how to be—a philosophy of the subject—subsequent to which, with a view to ordering finitude to meet autonomy, recognition, political liberty and political liberation, Kant and Rawls legislate, whilst Hegel and Taylor interpret. Yet, despite this epistemologico-political critique in the name of maturity, the humanist subject suffers the submission of subjectivity. As I claimed in section 6.ii., because of the modern juridico-administrative-governmental state, in which political rationality modelled on *pastoral-pouvoir* links the individualising power of discipline to the totalising power of regulation, humanist freedom fails to materialise. The kantian or rawlsian legislator, whose truth is divorced from power, and the hegelian or taylorian interpreter, who uses truth to inform juridical state power, is powerless in the face of *pouvoir/savoir* because he assumes that, by virtue of a pure truth that is untouched by power, it is possible to uphold the autonomous individual's undistorted intersubjective relations of mutual recognition.

Relatedly, it is possible to discern an unwitting fear of the manifestation of maturity by the champions of epistemologico-political critique, which they disguise in a will to know about the objectivity of things and the normativity that justifies juridical state power. At the outset, exponents of humanism advocate the moral ideal of freedom rather than its reality,<sup>100</sup> and this eighteenth century ambivalence toward maturity leads them to support enlightened despotism.<sup>101</sup> Humanist philosophers, past and present, seemingly fear the genie released by the death of God, whom they re-incarnate in the guise of humanity to effect a theologisation of man.<sup>102</sup> His will to know becomes the touchstone of truth and the legislative and

<sup>100</sup> Grimsley, "Introduction", pp. 20-22.

<sup>101</sup> Cranston, *Philosophers and Pamphleteers*, pp. 2-7.

<sup>102</sup> Foucault, "Foucault répond à Sartre", p. 664.

### *A Conclusion in Foucault's Critical Ontology*

interpretive ground of objective and normative experience. As the problem rather than the solution to maturity, the will to know conceals Kant's fear of the great unthinking masses, Rawls' readiness to propose what to think to common sense, Hegel's wish to deliver the rational to the actual, and Taylor's willingness to release articulations which empower subjectivity. To hide their awkwardness with freedom, humanists diligently toil away in the interests of the subject whose will to know fuels the desire for objective and normative truth. Kant, for example, not only proposes a pietist morality as the limit to action, as is places "all good conduct in man's subordination and subjection of his will to the discipline and training of a duty laid before his mental vision", but he suggests that, whilst this limit prevents man "from fanatically disorienting himself among imagined moral excellences", it also "assign[s] limits of humility (*i.e.*, of self-knowledge)",<sup>103</sup> which is the desire pivotal to the will to know.

I further underlined humanism's ambivalence toward freedom in sections 6.iii. and 6.iv.. Here, I portrayed how Foucault distinguishes an *æsthetics* of existence, which is based on an ascetic ethical relation to self, from a codified moral of existence under the tutelage of others, whether the abbot, pastor or psychiatrist, who mediate the hermeneutic relation to self and subordinate ethics to moral conduct.<sup>104</sup> For example, without a prior critical historical critique which, in spite of the continuity of moral austerity, demonstrates that in the problematisation of sex from the point of view of erotics there is a discontinuity in the ethical constitution of subjectivity between pre-platonic, platonic, stoic and augustinian erotics, interpretive critique is unable to conceive of the practical relation to self that predates early christianity's hermeneutic relation. In fact, because Taylor understands occidental subjectivity to originate with "the Christian understanding of the will", he is forced into an irrelevant rhetorical criticism of Foucault—"Can we toss aside the whole tradition of Augustinian inwardness [as Foucault wants us to]"?<sup>105</sup>—by the fact that Taylor's articulation of moral ontology settles for early christian thought in the fourth and fifth century as the origin of ethico-morality. Consequently, because he refuses to acknowledge Foucault's elucidation of subjectivity's dispersed beginnings in the ethical practices of the pre-christian subject, Taylor and other humanists remain enthralled by a philosophy of the subject instead of a philosophy that is concerned with the practice of freedom.

<sup>103</sup> Kant, "Inquiry into the *À Priori* Operations of the Will", pp. 126-127.

<sup>104</sup> For instance, Kant touches on the practices of the self insofar as a stoical régime of mental health fosters *homo noumenon's* mastery over *homo phænomenon*. Kant, *The Metaphysics of Morals*, pp. 266-272.

<sup>105</sup> Taylor, "Foucault on Freedom and Truth", p. 183. Cf. Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, pp. 253-254.

## *A Conclusion in Foucault's Critical Ontology*

### **7.iv. The Intellectual Praxis of the Critical Ontologist**

Through a critical history of the thought on humanism's path to enlightenment, archæology highlights how epistemological critique produces less an objective experience of who we are than man's perspective of the same on it, whilst genealogy points out that political critique reflects the might of this perspectivism in terms of the normative experience of confined exclusion for the different and the objectification and subjection of man into a normalised citizen. Humanism's implicit fear of freedom, which masquerades as various philosophies of the subject and implores a will to know objectivity and normativity, exacerbates the submission of subjectivity. My aim in this penultimate section is thus to illustrate the intellectual praxis of the critical ontologist, which as I argue below encapsulates Foucault's modern attitude and ascetic æsthetics of existence that leads to ethical subjectivity; that is, in contrast to humanism's inability to foster freedom, critical ontology affirms enlightenment.

To respond to the earlier criticisms of Foucault's alleged anormative critique and amoral freedom, which translates into an incoherent intellectual praxis that frustrates critical thought, it is fruitful to underscore the humanist and nietzschean paths to enlightenment. In view of the realist assumption that words represent things, the legislator's and interpreter's history of reason, which is above or latent within the world, promises a theoretical refinement of objective and normative experience to the extent that, on humanism's path to enlightenment, reason reassures modernity of its evolution toward the self-realisation of autonomous man's authentic being in recognition. However, for a nominalist like Foucault, to know who we are it is, as I emphasised in section 4.ii., vital to recount the history of the words which represent things, as "the history of various forms of rationality is sometimes more effective in unsettling our certitudes and dogmatism than is abstract criticism".<sup>106</sup>

Because modernity creates as it undercuts the conditions which make maturity possible, critique confronts the ambivalence of modernity's rationality in order to make the will to know conscious of itself as a problem. Through a critical history of confined exclusion, discipline, regulation and political rationality, which I detailed in sections 5.i., 5.v., 5.vi. and 6.ii., respectively, Foucault's self-confessed nietzscheanism realises Nietzsche's premonition of what a viable path to enlightenment necessitates:<sup>107</sup> "[W]hat sense would our entire existence have, if not

<sup>106</sup> Foucault, "Politics and Reason", p. 83.

<sup>107</sup> Foucault, "The Return of Morality", p. 251.

## *A Conclusion in Foucault's Critical Ontology*

this that in ourselves this will to truth has become conscious of itself as a problem"?<sup>108</sup> Foucault gives the will to know a consciousness of itself as a problem in terms of finitude as *pouvoir/savoir*, which answers the central question in modern critical thought: "How is it possible to exist as rational beings, who are fortunately destined to practice a rationality that is unfortunately shot through with intrinsic dangers"?<sup>109</sup>

Evidently, Foucault is no more the cause of the death of the philosopher than merit is the measure of success. Rather, because of his nietzschean path to enlightenment, Foucault's critique of finitude and his notion of freedom that is apt to the present fall on deaf ears. Nevertheless, he willingly pleads guilty to the murder in Paris of humanism's emissary of truth, the universal intellectual,<sup>110</sup> who in a like-minded manner to the legislator and interpreter displays an aristocratic demeanour of distance from power,<sup>111</sup> as well as a lack of empirical verification in his intellectual praxis.<sup>112</sup> Sartre's *engagement* in the 1960s as an existential socialist,<sup>113</sup> who as the agent of the progress of man's freedom that grounds epistemologico-political critique "*interferes in what does not concern him*",<sup>114</sup> is Foucault's main example of the universal intellectual.<sup>115</sup>

Critical history that locates truth within *pouvoir/savoir* means that Foucault declines the role of the kantian judge, the hegelian universal witness, or the rawlsian or taylorian referee who arbitrates moral doctrines and ontologies.<sup>116</sup> His refusal to legislate or legitimate to others, or what François Ewald calls Foucault's thought without confession,<sup>117</sup> arises because, as I argued in sections 4.iii. and 4.iv.,

<sup>108</sup> Nietzsche, *A Genealogy of Morals*, p. 220.

<sup>109</sup> "*Comment pouvons-nous exister en tant qu'êtres rationnels, heureusement voués à pratiquer une rationalité qui est malheureusement traversée par des dangers intrinsèques*"? Foucault, "Espace, savoir et pouvoir", p. 279.

<sup>110</sup> Foucault, "La fonction politique de l'intellectuel", pp. 110-111.

<sup>111</sup> Jennings, "Introduction: Mandarins and Samurais", p. 22.

<sup>112</sup> This can be contrasted with what Pierre Bourdieu calls Foucault's desire to know himself generically in the unthought, which entails the retrieval of the empirical conditions of possibility behind objective and normative experience. Bourdieu, "A Free Thinker: 'Do not ask me who I am'", pp. 81-82; Foucault, "Theatrum Philosophicum", pp. 188-192.

<sup>113</sup> On Sartre's fusion of existential freedom with marxist structures, see Barnes, "Sartre's Ontology"; McBride, "Sartre and Marxism"; Mészáros, *The Work of Sartre*, pp. 78-87.

<sup>114</sup> Sartre, "A Plea for Intellectuals", p. 244 and p. 264.

<sup>115</sup> In his re-affirmation of critical thought after the Vichy régime, Sartre personifies 1960s humanism that operates on the assumption of anthropological dialectical history. See, for example, Camus, "Discours de Suède"; Nizan, *The Watchdogs*, pp. 9-14; Sartre, "Présentation", pp. 2-8; Sartre, *What is Literature?*, pp. 127-171.

<sup>116</sup> Foucault, "Confinement, Psychiatry, Prison", pp. 196-197.

<sup>117</sup> Ewald, "Foucault, une pensée sans aveu", p. 46.

### *A Conclusion in Foucault's Critical Ontology*

although an archæology of objectivity's transcendental condition of existence of *savoir* is an advance over humanism's formal *a priori*, man, Foucault's attempt to push beyond him with the materiality of language founders as an explanation of the cause that effects transformation in discursive practices. After May 1968, Foucault defers *connaissance* to the non-discursive practices of *pouvoir*. As I suggested in sections 4.v. and 5.ii., the archæologist is also concerned with a genealogy of *pouvoir*. Much to the consternation of the powers that be at the *Collège de France*,<sup>118</sup> Foucault extricates himself from an ideological basis of dissidence and assumes the role of a specific intellectual.<sup>119</sup>

Foucault says that if "I do the analyses I do it is ... because I have been involved in certain conflicts".<sup>120</sup> The critical ontologist, who transforms himself through critical history and invests his research in critique that gives shape to maturity,<sup>121</sup> works in the "constraints of the present time ... [and] locates and marks the weak points".<sup>122</sup> Located in the intersubjective capillary *pouvoir* that is elucidated and reconceived by Foucault,<sup>123</sup> which I articulated in sections 5.iii., 5.iv. and 6.i., the critical ontologist recognises that he, too, is an object and an instrument of régimes of truth.<sup>124</sup> His critique of extra-judicial *pouvoir/savoir* has no more than a specific, local significance,<sup>125</sup> which is why speaking for others on the basis of a philosophical subject would be an indignity.<sup>126</sup> Or rather, he does not speak for the oppressed so much as enable them to speak: *La parole aux détenus!*, as he encourages in his support of prison reform.<sup>127</sup> In so doing, he opens up new spaces of possibility and thought, which allows those who are directly affected to correct what is wrong.<sup>128</sup>

Bourdieu terms this the critical ontologist's bidimensional nature.<sup>129</sup> He is an academic philosopher who works within systems of thought—critique is his

<sup>118</sup> On Foucault's engagement, see Eribon, *Michel Foucault*, pp. 327-336; Macey, *The Lives of Michel Foucault*, ch. 12; Miller, *La Passion Foucault*, pp. 215-225.

<sup>119</sup> Foucault, "Confinement, Psychiatry, Prison", pp. 193-195.

<sup>120</sup> Foucault, "Questions on Geography", p. 65.

<sup>121</sup> Bourdieu, "'Fieldwork in philosophy'", p. 29.

<sup>122</sup> Foucault, "Power and Sex", p. 124.

<sup>123</sup> Foucault, "Truth and Power", p. 116.

<sup>124</sup> Foucault, "Les intellectuels et le pouvoir", p. 308.

<sup>125</sup> Foucault, "La fonction politique de l'intellectuel", p. 109.

<sup>126</sup> Foucault, "Intellectuals and Power", p. 209.

<sup>127</sup> Foucault, "Le grand enfermement", pp. 301-304.

<sup>128</sup> Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, § 977, p. 512.

<sup>129</sup> Bourdieu, "Fourth Lecture, Universal Corporatism", pp. 656-658.

## *A Conclusion in Foucault's Critical Ontology*

praxis<sup>130</sup> — as well as a specific intellectual who engages in politics by manipulating the knowledge and methods of academic analysis.<sup>131</sup> The specific intellectual perceives the intolerable. In virtue of his privileged status within the university,<sup>132</sup> he brings subjugated knowledge to prominence.<sup>133</sup> Theory is a toolkit with which to analyse, step by reflective step, “the specificity of mechanisms of power, ... [and to] build little by little a strategic knowledge”.<sup>134</sup> Critique, Foucault claims, liberates the thought particular to a struggle and makes “transformations urgent enough for people to want to carry them out and difficult enough to carry them out for them to be profoundly rooted in reality”.<sup>135</sup>

The critical ontologist, who is a philosophy professor and a citizen keen to see critique manifest freedom, represents Foucault's endeavour to make sense of the ethico-moral question that is posed by 1968.<sup>136</sup> Maurice Blanchot sums up the critical ontologist's bidimensional nature well when he compares him to the politically engaged citizen who lacks the theoretical tools for critique. The specific intellectual, Blanchot suggests, “is like a sentry: he is always alert and keeps watch over politics, while his vigil expresses a care for others rather than his own concerns”.<sup>137</sup>

A critical ontologist is a philosopher devoted to *le souci de soi*, the care of himself through critical thought. He is also a citizen who is unafraid to use his understanding without the guidance of another, which translates into a concern for *le souci des autres*, the care for — but not of — others. At a minimum, he cares that the constitutional rights of others are legally enforced,<sup>138</sup> whether they be those of students who demand the non-interference of politicians in their Vincennes curriculum,<sup>139</sup> or rights which pertain to the miscarriages of justice by a conservative judiciary against youth,<sup>140</sup> refugees,<sup>141</sup> or the living conditions of

<sup>130</sup> Foucault, “Intellectuals and Power”, p. 208.

<sup>131</sup> Foucault, “The Concern for Truth”, pp. 263-264.

<sup>132</sup> Bourdieu, “The uses of the ‘people’”, p. 151.

<sup>133</sup> Foucault, “L'intellectuel sert à rassembler les idées”, p. 421; Foucault, “Je perçois l'intolérable”, pp. 204-205.

<sup>134</sup> Foucault, “Powers and Strategies”, p. 145.

<sup>135</sup> Foucault, “Practicing Criticism”, p. 155.

<sup>136</sup> Gordon, “Afterword”, p. 233.

<sup>137</sup> “[L'intellectuel est] ... comme un guetteur qui n'est là [dans la politique] que pour veiller, se maintenir en éveil, attendre par une attention active où s'exprime moins le souci de soi-même que le souci des autres”. Blanchot, *Les intellectuels en question*, p. 13.

<sup>138</sup> Foucault, “Verité, pouvoir et soi”, p. 782.

<sup>139</sup> Foucault, “Le piège de Vincennes”.

<sup>140</sup> Foucault, “Meeting Verité-Justice. 1500 Grenoblois accusent”.

## *A Conclusion in Foucault's Critical Ontology*

prisoners due to society's over imprisonment of the population.<sup>142</sup> For Foucault, the critical ontologist directs critique at the truth effected by *pouvoir/savoir*, though not out of a desire "to know if it is possible to construct a new politics of truth ... [or] to change a person's 'consciousness'", but because from the perspective of Nietzsche's path to enlightenment critique targets "the political, economic and institutional régime that produces the truth" and defines finitude.<sup>143</sup>

### **7.v. A Modern Attitude of Critique and Ascetic Aesthetic Maturity**

Because Foucault is clear about who we are as subjects of humanist critical thought, in which maturity is constituted by the political rationality of the modern state and its mechanisms of discipline and regulation, he leaves the question about what we are open.<sup>144</sup> Foucault's originality lies in "his refusal to convert our finitude into the basis for new certainties".<sup>145</sup> Instead, through his diagnosis of finitude,<sup>146</sup> the critical ontologist oversees the revolving door of modernity's ambivalent rationality that harbours maturity.<sup>147</sup> He is an agitator of the experience of who we are, with the express intent of making facile gestures difficult.<sup>148</sup> The critical ontologist, Veyne suggests,

[is] a warrior in the trenches ... who has enough energy to fight without having to justify himself in order to reassure himself. ... The course of history ... only offers valorizations that differ from one culture to another and even from one individual to another, valorizations that, as Foucault was fond of saying, are neither true nor false: they are, that's all.<sup>149</sup>

Due to his bidimensional nature, which translates into the care for himself and others such that he acts and is not a fatalist in his agitation from the trenches, the critical ontologist displays a modern attitude of critique in respect of finitude and a concomitant ontology for maturity of an ascetic aesthetics of existence, and in this concluding section I bring together Foucault's thought and action to

<sup>141</sup> Foucault, "Le problème des réfugiés".

<sup>142</sup> Foucault, "Enquête sur les prisons", pp. 179-181; Foucault, "(Manifeste du G. I. P.)", p. 174.

<sup>143</sup> "[D]e savoir s'il est possible de constituer une nouvelle politique de la vérité. Le problème n'est pas de changer la 'conscience' des gens ou ce qu'ils ont dans la tête; mais le régime politique, économique, institutionnel de production de la vérité". Foucault, "La fonction politique de l'intellectuel", p. 114.

<sup>144</sup> Gordon, "Foucault in Britain", p. 268.

<sup>145</sup> Veyne, "The Final Foucault and His Ethics", p. 5.

<sup>146</sup> Foucault, "Foucault répond à Sartre", p. 665.

<sup>147</sup> Foucault, "Espace, savoir et pouvoir", p. 279.

<sup>148</sup> Foucault, "Practicing Criticism", p. 155.

<sup>149</sup> Veyne, "The Final Foucault and His Ethics", pp. 2-3.



### *A Conclusion in Foucault's Critical Ontology*

demonstrate how, through Nietzsche and Kant, he exemplifies enlightenment critical thought.

As a follower of Nietzsche's path to enlightenment, Foucault approaches maturity with a preceding analysis of finitude, subsequent to which he suggests how to be within it. Critical history is a hyppolitean *finitude philosophique* of man's limit of *pouvoir/savoir*, whilst critical ontology reflects the freedom appropriate to it.<sup>150</sup> At first, archæology discerns the *savoir* behind the discursive practices that articulate what we think and how we act, whilst a genealogy of *pouvoir* highlights the possibility for the transformation of the thought and action which informs experience.<sup>151</sup> If what Heidegger describes as Kant's critical ontology requires that one knows the limits of knowledge in order not to transgress them,<sup>152</sup> and one searches for the transcendental structures of consciousness which have universal value, then Foucault's critique of finitude employs genealogy to reveal the contingent and arbitrary within the universal and obligatory, which initially is excavated by archæology.<sup>153</sup> When critical history is amalgamated with a limit-attitude, the outcome is a critical ontology of who we are in the present.<sup>154</sup> As a historico-practical test of limits and an exposure of the virtual fractures or spaces of freedom, critical ontology pursues maturity as a transformative practice *vis-à-vis* finitude.<sup>155</sup>

With regard to Nietzsche, Foucault mirrors his ethic as a philosopher. In imitation of the ethical subject in antiquity and early christianity, which I analysed in sections 6.iv., 6.v. and 6.vi., the philosopher displays the ascetic care of himself, or the "exercise of self upon self by which one tries to ... transform one's self and to attain a certain mode of being".<sup>156</sup> In these personal moments of what I alluded to in section 1.iii. as a politics of critique, the critical ontologist's thoughts arise with the same necessity that a tree bears fruit, though "[w]hether they are pleasant to *your* taste, these fruits of ours? – But what matters that to the trees! What matters that to *us*, the philosophers!".<sup>157</sup> Yet, in contrast to Nietzsche, Foucault's critique that cares for others involves an identification with the weak and vanquished, and as such

<sup>150</sup> Foucault, "Jean Hyppolite. 1907-1968", p. 781.

<sup>151</sup> Foucault, "'What is Enlightenment?'" , p. 46.

<sup>152</sup> Heidegger, "Kant's Thesis about Being", pp. 349-350.

<sup>153</sup> Foucault, "'What is Enlightenment?'" , p. 45.

<sup>154</sup> Foucault, "'What is Enlightenment?'" , p. 47.

<sup>155</sup> Foucault, "Critical Theory/Intellectual History", pp. 36-37.

<sup>156</sup> Foucault, "The ethic of the care for the self", p. 2.

<sup>157</sup> Nietzsche, *A Genealogy of Morals*, p. 3.

### *A Conclusion in Foucault's Critical Ontology*

critical ontology surpasses Nietzsche. Foucault does not settle for the stoical *amor fati* of the *Übermensch*—namely, “that one wants nothing to be different, not forward, not backward, ... [n]ot merely bear what is necessary, ... but love it”<sup>158</sup>—and critical history does not hasten his arrival.<sup>159</sup> After the death of God and his reincarnation as man, Foucault shies away from the prescription of certainties or substitutes such as the *Übermensch*. In their place, he suggests an aesthetics of existence, which places “at the center of both thought and action the imaginative creativity which has been exiled to the exclusive practice of art”.<sup>160</sup>

Similarly, to the extent that one “is not likely to arrive at Nietzsche ... without having first travelled via Kant”,<sup>161</sup> Foucault’s debt to Kant incorporates, as with his shift beyond Nietzsche, a reformulation of enlightenment critical thought. It is most obvious in respect of critique that precedes and gives rise to, rather than proceeds from, ontology. Because “modern philosophy is the philosophy that is attempting to answer ... *Was ist Aufklärung?*”,<sup>162</sup> Foucault understands *Aufklärung* as an ongoing process and obligation to exit from the immature use of reason in thought and action. Escape is both institutional and spiritual, or political and ethical.<sup>163</sup> Kant’s reflection on the present as difference in history, which specifies philosophy’s task of critique, implores what Foucault terms an attitude of modernity. It implies neither a sequel to, nor a rupture with, *Aufklärung*.<sup>164</sup> An attitude of modernity is:

a mode of relating to contemporary reality; a voluntary choice made by certain people; in the end, a way of thinking or feeling; a way, too, of acting and behaving that at one and the same time marks a relation of belonging and presents itself as a task.<sup>165</sup>

Further, insofar as what it is to be modern moves away from a longitudinal relation to the past to a direct, sagittal relation to the present,<sup>166</sup> modernity is “the transient, the fleeting, the contingent; it is one half of art, the other being the eternal

<sup>158</sup> Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo*, quoted in Nancy, *The Birth to Presence*, p. 397, f. 3.

<sup>159</sup> Bové, “Mendacious Innocents”, pp. 381–383.

<sup>160</sup> Bernauer, “Michel Foucault’s Ecstatic Thinking”, p. 71.

<sup>161</sup> Gordon, “Foucault in Britain”, p. 258.

<sup>162</sup> Foucault, ““What is Enlightenment?””, p. 32.

<sup>163</sup> Foucault, ““What is Enlightenment?””, pp. 33–35.

<sup>164</sup> Foucault, ““What is Enlightenment?””, pp. 38–39.

<sup>165</sup> Foucault, ““What is Enlightenment?””, p. 39.

<sup>166</sup> Foucault, “Kant on Enlightenment and revolution”, p. 12.

### *A Conclusion in Foucault's Critical Ontology*

and the immovable".<sup>167</sup> Foucault's modern attitude, which he borrows from Charles Baudelaire, bypasses the *flâneur's* sensitivity to the contingent with an ironic "will to 'heroize' the present",<sup>168</sup> for to be modern is "to extract from fashion the poetry that resides in its historical envelope".<sup>169</sup> A modern attitude and a concern for maturity necessitate:

the difficult interplay between the truth of what is real and the exercise of freedom ... . [The] high value of the present is indissociable from a desperate eagerness to imagine it ... otherwise than it is ... . Baudelarian modernity is an exercise in which extreme attention to what is real is confronted with the practice of liberty that simultaneously respects this reality and violates it.<sup>170</sup>

To his modern baudelarian attitude to the present, Foucault adds a relationship with oneself that is constituted by an indispensable asceticism. As I highlighted in sections 6.v. and 6.vi., he retrieves the model for it from antiquity, where a practical relation to self that is defined by the agonistic mastery of oneself enables the ethico-political self's moderation of himself and his government of others. Foucault, who discards the asymmetrical relations to others that is concomitant with greek antiquity's practical relation to self, preserves the agonistic element. He combines it with the ethico-social self's rational care of oneself in græco-roman antiquity, which leads to the continuous conversion to himself. Like the *dandy*, who neither accepts himself as the same in the flux of the contingent, nor discovers himself in the face of it, Foucault's ascetic agonism replaces being, or a hermeneutics of the autonomous self's authentic being that is affirmed in recognition, with the ongoing process of becoming.<sup>171</sup> It is an ethos of *dandysme*, which requires the ascetic production of oneself and an æsthetic invention of forms of maturity.<sup>172</sup>

If, for Kant, *Aufklärung* "simultaneously problematizes man's relation to the present, man's historical mode of being, and the constitution of the self as an autonomous subject",<sup>173</sup> with Foucault there is a permanent re-activation of a modern attitude of critique and an ascetic æsthetic maturity. He asks how we are constituted as subjects of our own knowledge, as subjects who exercise or submit to

<sup>167</sup> Baudelaire, "The Painter of Modern Life", p. 403.

<sup>168</sup> Foucault, "'What is Enlightenment?'" , p. 40.

<sup>169</sup> Baudelaire, "The Painter of Modern Life", p. 402.

<sup>170</sup> Foucault, "'What is Enlightenment?'" , p. 41.

<sup>171</sup> Foucault, "Michel Foucault, une interview", p. 736.

<sup>172</sup> Foucault, "'What is Enlightenment?'" , pp. 41-42.

<sup>173</sup> Foucault, "'What is Enlightenment?'" , p. 42.

## *A Conclusion in Foucault's Critical Ontology*

power relations, and as moral subjects of our own actions.<sup>174</sup> With a critical history of thought, Foucault historicises Kant's philosophical questions: how have my questions been produced and the path of my knowing determined? (versus what can I know?); how have I been situated to experience the real and how does exclusion operate in delineating the realm of obligation for me? (versus what ought I to do?); and what are the struggles in which I am engaged and how have the parameters for my aspirations been defined? (versus what may I hope for?).<sup>175</sup> These questions define the terrain of foucauldian critique. In contrast to the legislative and interpretive critique on the humanist path to enlightenment, foucauldian critique does not take its orientation from a philosophy of the subject's autonomy, recognition, political liberty or political liberation. Instead, because man who shoulders epistemologico-political truth is the subject of games "of rules for the production of truth" within the limits of *pouvoir/savoir*,<sup>176</sup> Foucault's critique is prior to an ontology. The inquiries critical history demands:

have their methodological coherence in the at once archaeological and genealogical study of practices envisaged simultaneously as a technological type of rationality and as strategic games of liberties; they have their theoretical coherence in the definition of the historically unique forms in which the generalities of our relations to things, to others, to ourselves, have been problematized. They have their practical coherence in the care brought to the process of putting historico-critical reflection to the test of concrete practices.<sup>177</sup>

Foucault's maturity that comes to light on the back of a modern attitude of critique is fundamentally a practice of freedom. The *telos* is an æsthetic style of existence, which does not mean a distinct image or status but, as Veyne argues,

the word [style] is to be taken in the sense of the Greeks, for whom an artist was first of all an artisan and a work of art was first of all a work. ... [T]he self, taking itself as a work to be accomplished, could sustain an ethics that is no longer supported by either tradition or reason; as an artist of itself, the self would enjoy that autonomy that modernity can no longer do without.<sup>178</sup>

Foucault's state of being autonomous in thought and action is an ascetic ethical practice with political overtures: ascetic and ethical because subjectivity is stylised by practices of the self, "for what is morality, if not the practice of

<sup>174</sup> Foucault, "What is Enlightenment?", pp. 42-49.

<sup>175</sup> Bernauer, "Michel Foucault's Ecstatic Thinking", pp. 46-47.

<sup>176</sup> Foucault, "The ethic of the care for the self", p. 16.

<sup>177</sup> Foucault, "What is Enlightenment?", p. 50.

<sup>178</sup> Veyne, "The Final Foucault and His Ethics", p. 7.

### *A Conclusion in Foucault's Critical Ontology*

liberty?"<sup>179</sup> and political because, *vis-à-vis* the *pouvoir/savoir* that tends to states of domination, ethical subjectivity is necessarily an agonistic practice that is constituted over against finitude through transitory coalitions of individuals,<sup>180</sup> who once they achieve liberation effect new relations of governmentality, which in turn calls for the æsthetic (re)stylisation of existence.<sup>181</sup>

Along Nietzsche's path to enlightenment, politics is an ethics.<sup>182</sup> At the very least, there is an acknowledgement of the political in ethics. In place of humanism's philosophical subject, who is the foundation for moral being, the maturity that leads one to enlightenment entails an ethical subjectivity in which one is always becoming. Whence the priority for Foucault of a kantian notion of critique which, although not defined by a faithfulness to the doctrinal elements of *Aufklärung*, "requires work on our limits, that is, a patient labor giving form to our impatience for liberty".<sup>183</sup>

After all, man is an animal whose will to know, because it is inextricable from relations of power, places his maturity in political question. And insofar as the philosophical answer to it is provided by critical thought that heralds enlightenment, then as I have argued in this dissertation Foucault personifies it with a *histoire critique de la pensée*, in which critique on our limits gives form to an ontology.

<sup>179</sup> Foucault, "The ethic of the care for the self", p. 4.

<sup>180</sup> Foucault, "The Confession of the Flesh", p. 208.

<sup>181</sup> Foucault, "The ethic of the care for the self", pp. 3-4.

<sup>182</sup> Foucault, "Politics and Ethics", p. 375.

<sup>183</sup> Foucault, "'What is Enlightenment?'" , p. 50.

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